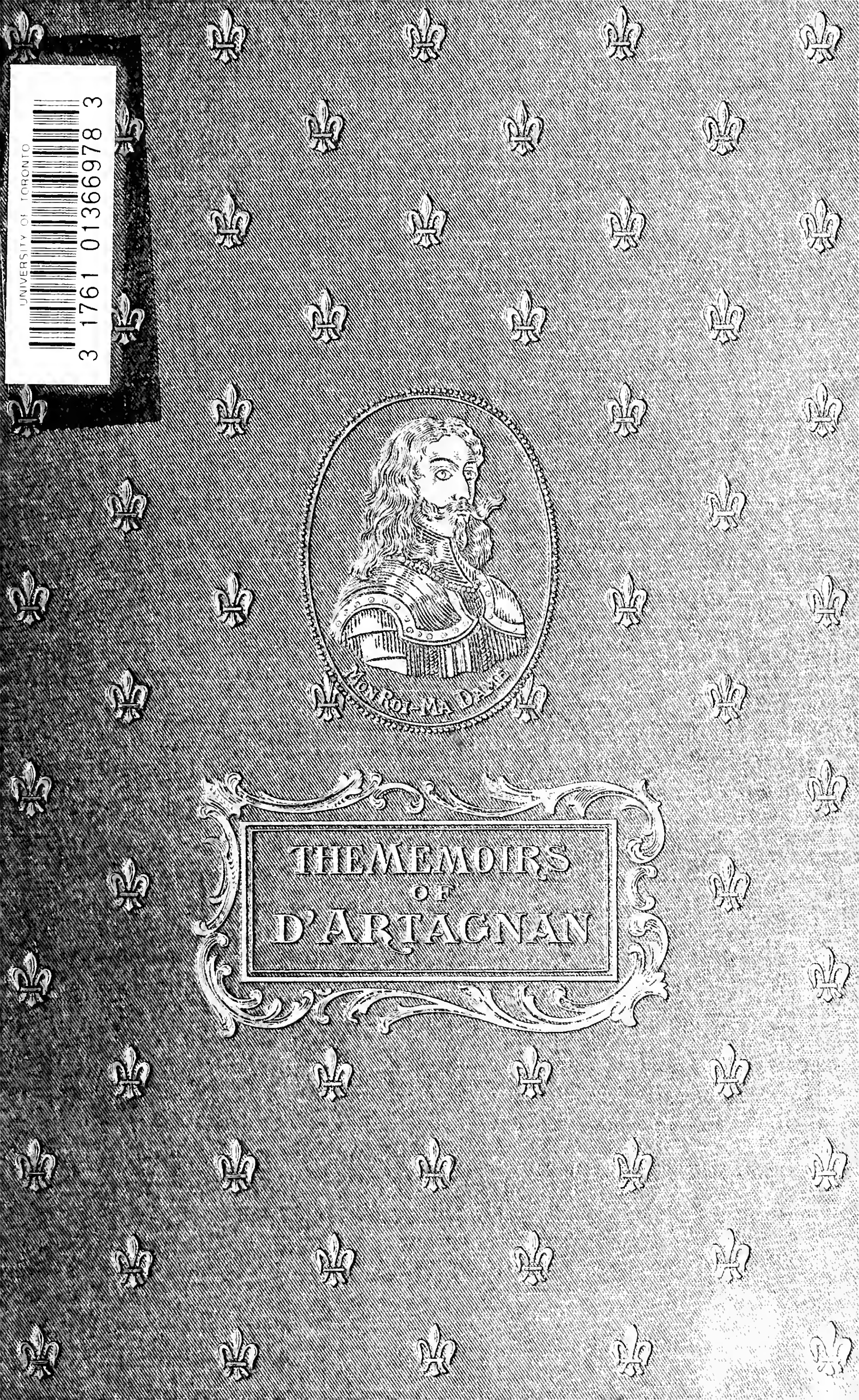

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MON ROI-MA DAME
THE MEMOIRS
OF
D'ARTAGNAN

MEMOIRS OF
MONSIEUR D'ARTAGNAN

MEMOIRS OF

CAPTAIN-LIEUTENANT OF THE 1ST COMPANY
OF THE KING'S MUSKETEERS

BY

COURTILZ DE SANDRAZ

NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

RALPH NEVILL

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MEMOIRS OF M. D'ARTAGNAN,

"CAPTAIN-LIEUTENANT OF THE 1ST COMPANY OF THE KING'S MUSKETEERS."

I

THE defeat of Valenciennes had given the Spanish Ambassador, who was with Cromwell, hopes of breaking the treaty which his Majesty (Louis XIV) had made with him, as he had won over the greater portion of the Parliament of England, and was aware that the laugh usually lies with those who win. It was wonderful to see how boastful he became directly he had learnt of the victory which the arms of the King, his master, had gained over those of his Majesty. But the result having eventually not come up to his hopes, and France, on the contrary, having soon regained the upper hand, he had more trouble than he thought to bring his plan to a successful issue. Cromwell, who was one of the cleverest men of his age, after having for some time appeared to give way to the Parliament, of a sudden followed the example of France, whose misfortunes had not been of long duration. He expelled from that body those who ventured to oppose his wishes, and having threatened

the others with the same treatment, were they ever to think of imitating their colleagues, he by so doing re-established his power in face of the plots against him to such an extent as to perceive himself more than ever in a condition to lay down the law to England. Accordingly, the first thing he did after having ejected his opponents from the Parliament, was to make the Ambassador himself quit the realm. This he indeed did with such haughtiness that, as a thousand unpleasant things had preceded his reception of this order, the Spaniard for some time was afraid that he would be arrested.

M. le Cardinal sent one of his gentlemen to compliment the Protector on his victory. He deemed that he might certainly apply that name to what he had just done, since, had he succumbed to the plots laid against him, his fate would have been a thousand times worse than were he to have lost a battle. This gentleman, at the same time, received orders to press him to carry out the treaty which he had concluded with the King, and, therefore, to send him twelve thousand men whom he had promised to add to his troops.

The Spaniards were very sore about the way in which Cromwell had treated their Ambassador. They had a pamphlet printed on the subject, and, having had it sown broadcast throughout London, Cromwell, who feared a rebellion, because there were terrible murmurings against him, was obliged to counterorder not only the half of his troops but also their commander. They had already started, and were on their way towards the sea under the leadership of Colonel Malmey, a man who was so devoted to the Protector that he trusted him no less than Lambert and Harrison whom he was wont to

call his right arm. Indeed they had always taken part in his expeditions and had served him so well that without them he might perhaps not always have succeeded as he had done. Be this as it may, the departure of these troops having alarmed the Spaniards to such an extent that they thought everything lost, they withdrew most of their garrisons to reinforce those of their seaports. As they knew from the treaty concluded between His Majesty and the Protector that Dunkirk was to be attacked before anything else was done, they deemed that it was there that they must begin to take precautions. Accordingly they put a powerful garrison into it without nevertheless reflecting that by this course of action their other fortresses remained exposed to the ambition of these two Powers. For, by remodelling their treaty, they might agree together to abandon all thoughts of Dunkirk and at once make for the place most open to attack. Indeed, the one thing might now be done without the least obstacle, whereas the other was not quite the same kind of affair.

The Vicomte de Turenne was to have the sole command that year of the army in Flanders. What had happened before Valenciennes had made the Cardinal at last realise that if he had been right in one respect, when he had wished to have two generals to one army, he had been wrong in another, since such great inconveniences had arisen from it. The Vicomte assembled his troops in the direction of Amiens, where the King had gone in person to see them defile before him. This general, who knew what the Spaniards had done, thought that he might do a great deal before the English arrived. The Cardinal had

sent back to England the same gentleman who had been to compliment Cromwell, to arrange that he should not reduce the help he had promised His Majesty by one half, as he was about to do. Cromwell excused himself, alleging the present impossibility of keeping his word. He pointed out to this gentleman that the pamphlet which the Spanish had had distributed had made the minds of the English once more so bitter against him that he was imperatively obliged to remain armed in the kingdom, otherwise there would be no safety for his person, so that he would be risking a speedy repentance. His excuse would have appeared a valid one to a disinterested man, but as everyone thinks of his own interests without troubling at all about those of others, it resulted that the Cardinal, who reckoned that after having taken Dunkirk one might further capture Gravelines and all the other fortresses which are round about, provided that his treaty were carried out, insisted upon its being thoroughly observed without consenting to forego any part of it.

This matter was a long time in suspense, both these two men remaining obstinately desirous of getting the better of one another, which caused it to be believed for some time that the treaty would be broken. And indeed I do not doubt but that such was the Cardinal's plan, because, as he had promised much money to the Protector and had even paid him the greater part of it, he insisted either on the sum being reduced by one half or that the treaty should be observed in its entirety. Cromwell, who would have consequently been obliged to return this money, would hear no talk at all of such a thing. Meanwhile, during the time the discussion was still being carried on in London without either side

showing signs of giving way, the Vicomte de Turenne, after having assembled his army, made a pretence of leading it towards the sea. He was afraid that, were he to make people think that he intended to attack elsewhere, the enemy would at once guard against it. He deceived them by this false march so that, still believing that Dunkirk was his destination, they betook themselves in that direction, so as to be in a position to convey all necessaries into it. They also thought that by so doing they would keep the surrounding fortresses which they valued almost as jealously as Dunkirk itself. The Vicomte de Turenne was delighted to see them take the bait; and, proceeding to make clear his real plan from that time, he detached Castelnau with a party of cavalry to go and besiege Cambrai the other side of L'Escaut. He himself marched with the rest to besiege it on the near side, whilst he gave orders to the infantry to follow him as quickly as possible.

There were not more than six hundred men—both in the town and in the citadel, which was nothing in comparison to what would have been necessary to properly defend it. The Vicomte de Turenne therefore reckoned on making himself its master before long, and merely awaited his infantry to do so, intending to begin the siege by making lines of circumvallation. He had no idea whatever of making any of countervallation, because he saw no reason to fear the garrison on account of its weakness. However, as ill-luck would have it, the same day that Castelnau had besieged the place (which was the twenty-ninth of May) the Prince de Condé, having gone out of Brussels to review his cavalry, met on his way a man whom the Governor

of Cambrai was sending to Dom Juan, to inform him that the enemy was before the fortress. He did not hesitate as to what course he should take on such a pressing occasion. He realised that, were he to wait till he had collected his army to succour it, Cambrai would either be captured before his arrival or at least the lines of circumvallation would have been made, and so he would be obliged to risk a battle, the issue of which would be doubtful. He deemed, therefore, as the result did not seem very certain, that he would do better to suddenly march with the cavalry which he was about to review than to rely upon anything so hazardous. Going therefore, to the battle field he had appointed for the review, instead of amusing himself by making the soldiers manœuvre and defile before him, he of a sudden made them set out towards Cambrai, which was so far off that he could only arrive there the night between the last day of May and the first of June. The Vicomte de Turenne was bivouacking there with great care, not that he had any idea of what was going to happen, but he was afraid that the governor of some Spanish fortress who might be in the neighbourhood, would undertake to give help to the town. He was unwilling that the Spaniards should have such a pull over him, as to be able to say that they had put this affront upon him—the more so as this nation was already quite proud of another success they had gained the first day of Spring. Indeed, after having missed Saint-Guilan in the last campaign, they had eventually retaken it as the first fruits of the present one, on the twenty-second day of the month of March.

But, great captain as he was, the Vicomte de Turenne, having to deal with a prince not inferior to

himself, found on this occasion that all that a long experience of war might have taught him in the way of cleverness joined to vigilance availed him nothing. M. le Prince, who knew the whole of Flanders better than he knew the Hôtel de Condé, after having told his troops the place where the Vicomte de Turenne would be keeping the best look out, because it was there that he would expect the fortress to be relieved if an effort were now made, took quite a different road so as to avoid meeting him. He was not deceived: the vicomte, who was waiting for him just where he had said, had contented himself with placing the smallest portion of his troops in the quarter by which he came. He had even been of opinion that this was a spot which had only to be guarded for form's sake, so to speak. These worthless troops should nevertheless not have been the worst by reason of the favour which they were held in by the Minister. They were the regiments of Mazarin and of Mancini: but, as both their commanders and their captains were better courtiers than soldiers, they no sooner perceived the first squadrons of the Prince de Condé than, instead of standing their ground to give the others time to relieve them, they took to flight. In short, they behaved on this occasion no more nor less than if they had been a lot of women, instead of which the regiment de Clerembaut which supported them did its duty very well. In consequence it made M. le Prince run some danger, but having luckily got out of it, he had the gates of the town opened, where he was received as in a triumph.

The Vicomte de Turenne, who had only undertaken this siege by reason of the feebleness of the garrison, did not think fit, now it was reinforced by so many

good troops, and had such a great prince at its head, to persevere in his plan. He at once withdrew so that the world learnt this last event almost at the same time as the first. Indeed, there were but three days between the one and the other, which appeared so inconsiderable a time to those whose way is to criticise news before believing in it, that many of them would not believe that this fortress had really been besieged. They found according to the calculation they made, that the siege of Cambrai had been raised nearly at the same hour as it had been undertaken, because the two couriers who had brought these two items of news had come so close one upon the other, that they were inclined to think that it was but one. They were right to form this opinion from appearances, for it might be truly said that there was something obscure about it. Indeed, to believe that Cambrai had been relieved, people found that there had not been time to convey information to Brussels, and even less to have come to its relief. The forty leagues or very near, which lay between the two towns, made them maintain that such a thing could not have happened unless the Devil himself had had a hand in it. However, they were unaware that chance had accomplished what they thought could not naturally occur. In this lay the whole spell, and from it arose all their incredulity.

Be this as it may, the Cardinal no sooner learnt this bad news than he sent orders to his gentleman who was still in London, to agree with Cromwell about everything he wished. As it was no great distance from Amiens, where the Court then was, to Boulogne, where the courier whom he was sending into England was waiting to cross the sea, he was not long in arriving.

The Maréchal d'Aumont at once had a vessel found for him to cross in, and as the passage from there to England is but three hours at the most he got to London the next morning. The gentleman to whom this courier was to address himself, spoke to Cromwell an hour after, and having arranged everything with him, orders were sent to the troops under orders for France to instantly embark. The ships were quite ready and were on the sea coast, because they had already arrived there when they had been ordered to proceed no further. Accordingly, the embarkation having taken place with all the speed imaginable, Colonel Reynolds placed himself at their head in the place of Colonel Malmey.

There troops joined us at Tupigni and intended that we should march without wasting time towards the sea to carry out what had been decided on with Cromwell. However, as plans had been made even before the siege of Cambrai to have Montmedi besieged by the Maréchal de la Ferté, what had occurred before the other fortress compelled us to relieve him now that he had undertaken it and what Colonel Reynolds demanded could not be done. He took this ill because he had crossed over into France much less to advance our interests than to advance those of his own nation. Accordingly, all the trouble in the world was required to make him understand that he must wait patiently till the undertaking of the maréchal should be finished and that afterwards there would be time for everything.

The raising of the siege of Cambrai was the cause of this mishap. It had been reckoned that the maréchal would execute his enterprise whilst we were carrying out our own and that, as the enemy would be much more bent upon relieving Cambrai than Montmedi, all their

efforts would be directed against us. I think, indeed, that there would have been no need for so many discussions in that Court had not such an unexpected event taken place. I think, I say, that we should have left Cromwell where he was without thinking too much about him, always providing that the fear we had been in of his treating with the enemy had not made us return to him in spite of ourselves. Be this as it may, all one could tell Reynolds having made him no more tractable, someone had to be sent back to England so as to procure an order from Cromwell to make him listen to reason. Meanwhile, as it was to be feared that he would remain stubborn like his subordinate, the maréchal was ordered to put off his expedition till this matter should have been settled. The enemy, who had known from the attempts of the maréchal that he had designs against this fortress, had already sent a detachment in that direction to take precautions. Perceiving, however, that our army, which should have marched to cover this siege (always supposing that this place was really its destination), was taking quite another road, they left them where they were. They did not know that what was keeping us back was the obstinacy of Reynolds, and that otherwise we should have already been on the march.

The gentleman whom the Cardinal had sent to England to accelerate the marching of the succouring forces of that nation had already left that country when the courier whom his Eminence had just sent arrived there. Accordingly, being obliged to address himself to Bordeaux, who still remained ambassador, the latter, who was sore at the other matter having been made to pass through other hands than his own, might perhaps

not have done his duty as was right, had he been the absolute master. But as the King had himself written to Cromwell and had explained himself so well that this ambassador could spoil nothing, the Protector at once granted his request. We accordingly marched towards the Meuse, and the Vicomte de Turenne having had the cleverness to get between the detachment of the enemy and Montmedi, which the Maréchal had at last besieged, the whole Spanish army came to join this detachment to try and give help to the fortress. The siege was a long one, and the governor, Montlandri by name, extraordinarily distinguished himself. However, having been unhappily killed by his own men, whilst trying in person to see what we were doing at an advanced post, it seemed as if his death had deprived the enemy of courage. They only defended themselves, so to speak, as a matter of duty, so that we soon became the masters of that fortress.

The King, who from his infancy had been accustomed to take part in just as many campaigns as his army, came two or three times to the siege to expedite its success. All people of rank could not help admiring his extraordinary powers. He feared neither rain, sun, dust, nor the other inconveniences which fall to the lot of military men. Another cause for the admiration of his army was that his good looks put all the courtiers who claimed to be the most handsome in the shade. The only thing about his Majesty which could be criticised was that he appeared to be a little too much inclined to follow the counsels of the Cardinal. One indeed he was wont to give him, which was good in itself but of no value at all to a King, unless it was thoroughly looked into. Every day he recommended

him to be economical because he was afraid His Majesty, devoting himself to magnificence (as he appeared inclined to do), might want to know what became of his revenues so as to have enough. As His Eminence was in the habit of appropriating part of them, he looked a long way ahead, for fear he should be asked to render an account and be made to disgorge by the King when he should discover the way in which he misused them.

These lessons which could not be approved by anyone, considering the intention with which they were given to his Majesty, had nevertheless imprinted themselves so deeply upon his Majesty's mind, that he did violence to himself every day to carry them out. Indeed, such great economy was observed to be practised by him, that when on horseback he was often seen to take off his gloves and put them in his pocket when rain came on. Mayhap this prince acted thus only because he found it uncomfortable to have wet gloves on his hands, but as things are never understood in a good sense, especially when it is believed that they are prompted by the advice of some not too popular person, this was sufficient for the Cardinal to get the credit of it and receive the blame.

Montmedi, after having held out for nearly two months, surrendered by agreement without the Spaniards daring to attempt its relief. The Vicomte de Turenne posted himself in front of them at each attempt which they made, so much so that, being unable to advance further without passing over his body, their fear of being unsuccessful made them prefer to personally witness the loss of this fortress than risk receiving a great affront, by undertaking an enterprise which they deemed beyond their powers.

We decamped from Oise, where we had been posted to stop its being relieved, immediately after we had learnt of the surrender of the town. The Vicomte de Turenne who always had some scheme in his head, was sore at having lost Cambrai by a chance, after having laid his plans so well. He accordingly pondered as to how he could be revenged, and was also desirous of thereby effacing some rumours which his enemies had circulated to his prejudice, just as if he had been in fault! They almost wanted him to have guessed what had happened, as if whatever wisdom and whatever prudence a man may have he can foresee everything, and especially a thing like that! Be this as it may, as he had done well to have made a feint of re-entering France, when he had gone to besiege la Capelle, he again adopted the same trick to go and attack St. Venant. He passed from Oise to Etreux by the bridge, but all of a sudden returning to Flanders, because this little manœuvre had already put the enemy on the wrong scent, he covered his march so well by the pretext of several plans which they might think he had formed that, after having on his way retaken the Château d'Aimeries which had been seized when the enemy had gone to relieve Montmedi, he fell upon the fortress which he intended to besiege without their having the slightest idea that he was about to do so.

They were very astonished when they perceived that he had again this time tricked them just as before. Nevertheless, as there was a governor in the fortress on whom they relied a good deal, they believed that he would give them plenty of time to march to his assistance before finding himself obliged to capitulate. Accordingly, they assembled quite at their ease in the greatest numbers possible, and having appointed a

meeting place near the island for the troops which were to form the relief which they at once intended to despatch, they then advanced to Calonne. Our army which had left its heavy baggage at Arras, was in need of it to conduct this siege in comfort, and the Vicomte de Turenne who had, some days ago, detailed Siron, a lieutenant-general, to bring it into camp when he should find a safe opportunity of doing so, then ordered him to lose no time, always providing that he could carry out his instructions without risk. He made this restriction because the Comte de Bouteville who has since become Duc de Luxembourg was hovering around his wings with fifteen hundred horse, to prevent not only the baggage being conveyed, but further the despatch of money to the army which was in need of it.

Siron gained information that the Comte had gone towards Aire, a fortress situated in Artois ; so, thinking that before he could attack him he would have time to join us, he had everything which the Vicomte de Turenne had given into his charge taken out of Arras. His escort was but eight hundred horse, but as a compensation he had nearly two thousand foot soldiers, which should have made him perfectly safe, the more so as he could construct a sort of entrenchment for his infantry with the baggage. However, as it is a dangerous thing to deem oneself too safe, because it often causes the lack of precautions which would otherwise be taken, it turned out that when he was near Lilliers, which was but two leagues distant from our camp, he left the baggage to announce his arrival in person to the Vicomte de Turenne. Meanwhile, hardly had he entered our lines with a portion of his escort, than the Comte de Bouteville fell upon the remainder which

formed his rearguard. As ill-luck would have it, this portion of the escort had yet to pass through a defile when the comte made his attack, so that, disorder being produced by reason of everyone being in a hurry to pass, the comte profited so well by it that he pillaged the money and a part of the stores. This done, he set fire to the rest, and having retreated to the place he had set out from, the Court no sooner learnt of this catastrophe than it gave orders to the Vicomte de Turenne to have Siron court-martialled. He would never have escaped this had he been rigorously judged, but as friends are very useful in all sorts of predicaments, the Vicomte de Turenne saved him from harm. I do not know what expedient he adopted to succeed in this, since everyone already agreed in condemning Siron, but an order eventually arriving from the Court that nothing further should be done, Monsieur de Turenne devoted all his energies to fortifying himself so securely in his camp as to be no more exposed to have to pocket any fresh affront.

The enemy being quite elated, after such a fine beginning (as if everything must in the same way succeed with them as long as they should have anything to fight with us about) attacked a convoy which was coming to us from Béthune. Its escort defended it bravely, and, being also attacked, many people were killed on both sides. The enemy, who did not anticipate such a stout resistance, retreated when they perceived that we defended ourselves just as well as they could attack us. Meanwhile, having drawn near to our lines which we had fortified during six entire days before thinking of opening the trenches, they found them in such a good state that they did not dare to try and

force them. The Vicomte de Turenne, with a view to put an end to the disorder which the capture of our money had produced amongst us, assembled all the colonels and all the chief captains of regiments, to learn what assistance they could give their companies. They could have been in no greater need than they were. Everyone was in want and the propinquity of the enemy further increased it, because everything which entered the camp was sold there for its weight in gold, so to speak. Those who found themselves in a position to help others assisted them according as they were able, and the Vicomte de Turenne, who as Chief Commander was obliged to do more than other people, had his plate melted down to give aid to those whom the captains were in no condition to assist. He then had this silver distributed to them in the form of money and obliged the sutlers to be content with it, as if it had been marked with the King's stamp.

This succour having proved very timely, the Vicomte de Turenne had the trenches opened. The enemy, who had reconnoitred our camp and had formed too high an opinion of it to venture to make an attack, still holding to the same opinion, retreated from our vicinity to go and besiege Ardres. This fortress, which is by the sea, was in the most pitiable state in the world, without outworks, without counterscarp, and almost as destitute of all sorts of fortifications as the smallest village might be. All this would have been of little importance had it contained a strong garrison, since in that lies the strength of a fortress much more than in anything else. However, there were hardly two hundred men there—a very small number or rather nothing at all to defend such a fortress. These two

hundred men were besides so ill-equipped, that one would have taken them rather for paupers than for soldiers. Most of them lacked clothes, shoes and hats, so much so that the Vicomte de Turenne, in his dilemma as to what was happening in this fortress, hardly knew what to do, whether to continue his siege or raise it to go to the relief of Ardres. Nevertheless, after having been very undecided for a day or two, he all of a sudden determined to pursue his enterprise at all risks. He formed three or four different detachments some of two hundred troopers, some of more, and yet others of less, wherewith to undertake the assault of the fortress. Romecourt, Captain in Villequier, a man whom we have since seen Lieutenant of the Gardes du Corps, was in command of one body, La Feuilleé of another, and some other officers of merit and tried valour were put at the head of the rest. All marched towards the fortress but by different roads. One after the other they vainly tried to carry out the orders which had been given them, for M. le Prince kept such a good look out, that far from being successful they came very near falling into his hands.

Romecourt who knew the country, nevertheless, saved himself with more ease than the rest. Directly he was discovered he retired into the woods, whence he returned to the camp to announce his bad luck. The others also came back after him, so much so that, unless the Vicomte de Turenne had taken the precaution to detail Coulanges, La Haye, and myself, to send us all three into it, the fortress would unfailingly have been taken. Coulanges was disguised as a sutler, La Haye as a peasant, and myself as a vendor of tobacco. Rouville, who was its Governor, was already beginning

to lose hope, even if he retained his courage. Knowing that the Vicomte de Turenne was engaged before St. Venant, he did not think that he could ever finish what he was undertaking in time to relieve him. Indeed, M. le Prince, without troubling to make a formal siege, had at once had trenches opened at twenty paces from the body of the fortress. He had also on his arrival set the miners to work, and intended immediately the mines had done their part, either to oblige the governor to capitulate or to take the place by assault, were he to adopt the line of resisting. I was the first to enter the fortress because I risked all for all, so as to be able to perform my mission before anyone else. I went straight to the quarters of M. le Prince where, feigning to be selling my tobacco, I asked one of his grooms if he had not some shabby tunic of his livery to sell me. By good luck he chanced to have one, and, having sold it to me, I put it on that very moment before his eyes. I made the excuse that my own was worthless, and added that it would serve as a safe conduct with the soldiers whom I accused of sometimes wanting to have my tobacco at too cheap a price. I also declared that they occasionally got it at their own price after a tough struggle so that the man might not find my change of raiment odd.

In this rig out I went to the trenches, where I took stock of everything and of how the miner was set to the wall. Thence I passed in full daylight over the parapet in the front of the trench feigning to be urging a soldier, who was boasting that he would proceed by that way to the walls of the town, to give me proof of his courage. I even promised to accompany him so as to embolden the man. This soldier was dead drunk, or very near,

so much so, that it was wine which originated the proposal. For myself, I pretended to be just as drunk, in order that my desire to imitate his folly might excite no surprise nor arouse any suspicion, and, indeed, when the Comte de Bouteville, who was that day in the trenches, directly he saw us crossing, asked what all this meant, answer was made that we were two drunkards who could not be prevented from committing the folly he was witnessing. To this he replied that there need be no fear on our account, because God helped fools and drunkards. Everyone having thus let us go our way, one after the the other bestowing their jeers upon us, I told my companion that we should be courting death were we to try and go together. My own opinion was, that it would be better for one to go first and the other after, as this would give less chance to the enemy. At the same time, I offered to lead the way and as the man was not so drunk as not to still have some care for his life, he did not fail to take me at my word. I consequently bade him stop, and further lie down on his stomach until I should have gone twenty or thirty paces. He was quite willing, and having at the same time taken my handkerchief from my pocket, I showed it to the besieged directly I was some way from him. This stopped their firing upon me as they had begun to do, the more so as I at once made for the entrance of the town. I was right to act thus, because directly I had taken out my handkerchief, and those in the trenches had seen me showing it to the besieged, they had in their turn begun to direct their fire at me. Happily for myself, I was a Basque, and as there is no one of that country who is not swift of foot, I soon escaped from the danger I should have

continued to run had I been foolish enough to go no faster than at a walking pace.

The officer in command at the gate which was on my way, caused me to enter by the postern, and having taken me for a valet of M. le Prince on account of my tunic, he asked me my reason for leaving a master of such great repute. I made reply that I was not the man he took me for, having no other master than the one he himself obeyed; but as I had not to render an account to him of who I was, he must have me conducted to the governor, so that I might tell him the reason of my arrival. This he at once did, and having made myself known to Rouville, I restored to him the hopes which he had begun to abandon since he had been besieged. I told him that M. de Turenne would set out at once in order to relieve them, and this was a reason why he need only defend himself for three or four more days at most. He immediately communicated the news to the garrison, so that it might rejoice with him, and at the same time a salute of all the artillery and musketry was fired as a sign of jubilation,—a circumstance which astonished M. le Prince, and made him fear that St. Venant had surrendered. I strongly suspected that such would be his idea, and that he could not think otherwise when he should hear this salvo. Accordingly, having donned the dress of a soldier in lieu of my own, so as to profit by his mistake, I repaired the next day to his camp as if I had been a deserter. I well knew that I should at once be conducted before M. le Prince, and that his curiosity would prompt him to ask me the meaning of the salute which we had just fired. Matters turned out exactly as I had expected. No sooner did he

see me than he enquired what news there was in the town, and why the salvo I have just spoken of had been given the preceding day. In reply, I declared that its origin lay in the arrival of a man named Coulanges, and another named La Haye, both cavalry officers, who had come on behalf of M. de Turenne to announce that St. Venant had surrendered upon certain terms. The garrison was to march out in two days, and the army would then set out to succour the besieged.

M. le Prince, whom one could not easily deceive, had some suspicion that I had been despatched to him, only to cause the raising of the siege by giving him the news in question. Consequently, I have no doubt but that he would have made me pass a very unpleasant time, had it not been that he remained as it were in surprise as to the real state of things. It having been reported to him that a man dressed in his livery had the day before thrown himself into the town after having crossed the trenches, he did not know what to think, for fear of making a mistake. This uncertainty did not nevertheless prevent him from threatening me with the gallows, just as if he was sure that I was giving false information. He even told me that it could not be true on account of several reasons which he detailed. Meanwhile, he eyed me fixedly to observe my expression and whether I should change colour, but as I took care not to betray myself, and knew that my life was at stake, I stood firm and made answer that he was master of my fate; that against this I could not struggle, but, were he to kill me, it would be a great act of injustice, for I could only tell him what I had knowledge of, and what all Ardres as well as I myself knew.

I had only used the names of Coulanges and La Haye

to add weight to my words, and, indeed, after having run great risks, these two men had at last just entered the town, so I had no fear of their being captured whilst attempting to get in, and thus proving me to be a liar. M. le Prince did not know what to think when he perceived me to be so full of assurance. Meanwhile, for fear of making a blunder by releasing me, he gave me over to the Prévôt, so as to have me hung, were he to discover that I had deceived him. He did not conceal his design from me, a fact which made me repent of the zeal which had led me into such great danger. Had I but been able to let M. de Turenne learn my plight I might have hoped that he would have done his best to extricate me from it, especially were he to know that it was only my endeavours on behalf of His Majesty which were bringing me close to destruction. However, having no hope of informing him, I was so grieved at seeing myself so near death that I resolved to risk everything rather than remain longer in the same state. I possessed thirty louis d'or which I had had sewn up in my breeches at all risks, not knowing what need I might have of them. I formed a plan of offering these to one of my guards so that he might give me my liberty. Nevertheless, I ran a great risk of rather destroying myself by such a course, because it was to be presumed that this guard, who was one of the archers of the Prévôt, would at once warn him of my proposal. It was, I said to myself, quite likely that I was about to further hasten my destruction by these means, when luck willed it that I should extricate myself from my evil plight without having to trouble to bribe anyone.

The Prévôt, whose protector with M. le Prince was

the Comte de Coligny, one of his Lieutenant-Generals, and a relative of his, had for a long time past been soliciting the prince through him to allow his company to be sent as a safe-guard. Just at this very time his request was granted, so much so that, having to send a number of his archers on this duty, he begged M. le Prince to relieve him of the prisoners who were under his charge. M. le Prince again granted his prayer, so that having been sent to the standard of the regiment of Condé, a trooper who was there as a vedette, and who was desirous of deserting, did so the very night on which I was given over to his charge. The other troopers who were keeping guard with him, slept soundly whilst I lay on the ground just as they did, but without any wish at all to sleep. I pondered over my fate continually, and reflected that I had perhaps not another twenty-four hours to live. This was a sorry condition for a man in good health to be in, especially when I further thought over the manner in which I was soon to leave the world! Hanging was in no wise to my fancy, and I could not think of it without horror.

Be this as it may, just as I was most absorbed in these sad reflections, I perceived the vedette who had, as is the custom, his sword in his hand, replace it in its scabbard, after having glanced to the right and to the left to see if any one was looking. After this he took the trouble to leave the place he was in as softly as possible. All these manœuvres did not allow me to entertain any doubts about his plans. I was at once convinced that he was deserting, and being of opinion that I could do no better than copy him, I was not long in following his example.

It did not seem as if he had chosen a good time to play

such a trick as this, but, as far as it concerned me, he could not have chosen a better, nor one from which I could have anticipated a more successful issue. I betook myself to a wood which was a quarter of a league from our camp, stopping on the edge to observe if I was being followed. Eventually, however, perceiving that nothing was on foot, I made for the open country, so as to be a good way off when day should break. I suspected that my escape would only then be discovered, and thought I had no great cause for fear before the time in question. At last, having made the best use possible of my legs, I was already more than three leagues from the camp when I descried the breaking of day. I at once went into another wood which was on my way for fear of being pursued and, as the saying is, falling out of the frying-pan into the fire. I passed the whole day in fearful terror by reason of hearing a number of people enter the wood one after the other. This made me think, as seemed very likely, that I was the object of their search. Nevertheless, good luck having decreed that I should not be discovered by anyone at the approach of night, I proceeded on my way. For at least four hours I walked without coming across anything, listening every moment to find out whether I was being pursued. Finally, one hour before daybreak, I heard the trotting of horses, a circumstance which obliged me to stop short. I at once lay down on the ground so as to let this cavalry pass, but, chance willing that these horsemen should come quite close to the place where I was lying, I dragged myself away on my stomach to avoid them. The scouts, who were in advance, then of a sudden turned off towards my hiding place, not that

they had discovered me, but because there were some trees near me which they took for men. A horse perceived me and was seized with fear, so much so that, springing aside, its rider made it return to its road in spite of itself, as is the practice of good riders, in order not to accustom it to become skittish. The horseman then descried me as his steed had done, and, bidding me rise and follow or he would put a musket shot through my body, I had to obey his words, because I could not help doing so. I did not wait for him to question me as to who I was once I had got up, and asking him his name in turn, because he spoke very good French and I hoped that he might be one of the King's soldiers, I added that, as for myself, I was a poor deserter who, repenting of his fault, was returning to his regiment to obtain a pardon.

My object was to speak in this way so that, if by chance I should happen to be making a mistake, he might be satisfied with taking me back prisoner to his comrades, without otherwise enquiring who I might be. The trooper, who was of the Royal foreign regiment and consequently one of the King's soldiers, as I had rightly guessed, then replied that it was all very well for me, now that I perceived myself captured, to tell him that I was about to return to my company, but that, had he not met me as he had done, mayhap never in my lifetime should I have gone back. It might perhaps also be possible that I was a spy instead of a deserter, which would soon be discovered notwithstanding all the subterfuges I might employ, since he was going to place me in the hands of a man who was clever enough to discover all my secret thoughts. He then bade me walk in front of him, and, at once obey-

ing, because he was not alone in giving me this order, his companions having joined him who would have soon ensured my compliance had I been recalcitrant, he sent word to the commander of this detachment of his meeting with me. It chanced that this officer was his colonel, and having come forward to see who I might be and to question me, I had no sooner glanced at him, than in spite of the darkness I recognised him as M. le Comte de Roye. Upon this any fears I might have felt gave place to great confidence. I told him my name, a thing which would not have been necessary had it been day. He was a personal friend of mine and I of his, but as it was night and my disguise besides rendered me unrecognisable, I thought myself obliged to act thus. The comte, was delighted to see me and at once had one of his led horses given to me, enquiring whence I came, and by what chance I found myself in such sorry plight? He knew nothing of my adventures, and had not even heard talk of them. In two words I let him know of what had befallen me and how I had only just escaped being hung. To this he replied that, frankly speaking, one risked a good deal when one did what I had just done. He himself was a good servant of the King and professed to be one, but his zeal for his Majesty, great as it might be, would never urge him to such a pitch as to run the risk of being hung for his interest! I retorted that there was a great difference between us. He was a great lord and one whose fortune was made; but as for me, I was but a poor gentleman having need of running every risk to get on, and therefore he must not be surprised at my doing that which he would be unwilling to do. By way of answer he declared that all the great fortune I attributed to him, consisted merely of twenty thousand

livres of income which his father had given him on his marriage. This was not much for a person of his rank, the more so as he had obtained no property with his wife.

She was his first cousin and the Vicomte de Turenne was the uncle of both of them. Husband and wife were staunch Huguenots, so much so that, although all the great Lords who were formerly of that religion have now changed, they are both still as attached to their faith as ever. This is nevertheless a reason why the Comte de Roye does not get on as he would do were he to show himself a little more tractable. For the King, who will not tolerate people opposing him in the slightest thing, does not always realise that it is more difficult to change one's religion than one's shirt. It is enough for him to be persuaded that his faith is the best to be desirous of everyone's belonging to it. Besides, he has an idea that two kinds of religion in one kingdom is a thing likely to cause its ruin.

However, not to entangle myself in this question, which besides has nothing to do with my subject, I had no sooner satisfied the curiosity of the Comte de Roye than I asked him for an escort of five or six troopers so as to be able to join our army without fear of marauders, for there were many about in this part of the country. They only dared, however, to form small bands, because M. de Turenne was wont to hang just as many as he caught without mercy nor even with any legal forms. We called these robbers "schenapans"[1] as is done in Germany, though, to distinguish them, we sometimes gave them another name in this district.

The comte having proceeded to grant me my

1 The word Schenapan is compounded of schnappen and hahn. Literally it means a chicken-stealer.

request, I set out to march the whole night with the troopers he had given me. The next morning, as we were wending our way and as I was in a road through a hollow, I descried a squadron on high ground. This made me draw rein. I believed these troops to be part of the garrison of Aire, from which place we ought not to have been far off, but seeing yet another squadron appear a moment later and a third after it, until there were six posted upon these heights, I continued on my way though they had detached ten or twelve troopers to come and interrogate me. Had I believed those with whom I was, far from going in this way to meet them, I should have turned my back without even dreaming of glancing back. But I did not think fit to take fright at the wrong time as they did. I told myself that this must infallibly be the head of our army, either because it had thought best to raise the siege of St. Venant and march to the relief of Ardres, or, after having taken the town, it had set out to carry out this latter enterprise.

I was not wrong: it was our army, a fact of which I was not long in being assured. Indeed, having got within hail of these troopers, they confirmed this on my crying, "Long live France" to make them speak. I at once went at a canter to M. de Turenne, who after having reduced St. Venant to obedience to his Majesty, was making forced marches on his way to relieve Rouville. He enquired of me the state in which I had left it. I answered that it was confident but weak, so much so, that I had great fears of his arriving too late to save it. He retorted that a remedy must be found, and he would look for one. I did not understand what he meant by this. The remedy which he might find was, it seems to me, to make his army fly instead of

making it march. How this was in his power, I could not perceive; indeed, I could not have arrived at any other conclusion. But great men such as he have methods which others do not possess, and which indeed they are not clever enough to dream of. He made his army march a little more to the left than it had before done, so that it might pass within sight of Aire.[1] He concluded that M. le Prince and the other Spanish generals would have given orders to the governor of that fortress to fire his cannon should he see him appear, so that, the ordnance of St. Omer making reply, it would be a signal for them to adopt the course they thought best in such a state of affairs. Matters turned out just as he had anticipated. The Governor of Aire no sooner perceived our advance guard than he fired several discharges of cannon. The commander of St. Omer did just the same, so that M. le Prince, inferring from this that we should soon be upon him, made the Spaniards agree to retiring from before Ardres. Nevertheless, not wishing to have anything to reproach himself with before taking this course, he caused Rouville to be summoned to surrender. He even had him told, the further to press him, that he would be shown, should he desire it, how the mines which had been prepared to blow up the body of his fortress were ready to do their work.

Rouville, who was not stupid, deemed that so much charity not being usual in an enemy should be regarded with great suspicion. Accordingly, coming near divining the reason of such conduct, he made answer to M. le Prince, that there was so much glory in opposing him that, even must he succumb in such a noble effort, he

1 At this time Aire and St. Omer were in the hands of the Spaniards.

was determined to run the risk. Let him fire his mines when he liked: he (Rouville) would be there to defend the breach they made. Well did he know that he should have trouble in resisting him, but at all events, should he be able to succeed, there seemed to him so much glory to be gained, that there was nothing he would not risk for such an end. M. le Prince could find nothing amiss in this answer, which was quite full of esteem and admiration for himself. Nevertheless, as he would have preferred less flattery and more ingenuousness, he sent back word as a last attempt that he might do as he liked, but if he were not to yield now he must not hope for any quarter. Rouville jeered at his threats as he had already done at his offers, and so M. le Prince, seeing there was nothing to be hoped for from him, at once raised the siege. He retired beneath the cannon of Gravelines where he had no fear of the Vicomte de Turenne coming to look for him.

This course which M. le Prince took was the safest one for him. As he had not made any lines of circumvallation he had of necessity to give up the game, as he was now doing, or come straight to us to give us battle. Anyhow, although the one was more glorious than the other, and consequently more to his taste (for he was a man who had never done anything but that which was admirable, with the sole exception of his rebellion) he could not do as he preferred by reason of the inconveniences which he foresaw must result. He was afraid that, if fortune should not support his courage, he would have something to repent of. Knowing of the treaty which we had made with England, and that there were even six thousand

Englishmen in our army who had been sent there to carry out what had been agreed upon, he foresaw that, after a defeat, the loss of the maritime fortresses of Flanders would be inevitable. He accordingly thought it best to be prudent whilst awaiting an occasion more favourable to himself.

M. de Turenne, whose army had been extremely fatigued by the march it had performed in order to be successful before St. Venant,—M. de Turenne, I repeat, who had given him no rest either during the siege or during the march he had just carried out, seized this opportunity to let M. le Prince take a little. But, after having made him stay some days in two camps close enough to one another and where he lacked for nothing, he detailed four thousand men (as much infantry as cavalry) to go and attack a château called la Motte au Bois. It was strong enough, and had a fairly good garrison; but Castelnaut, whom he had placed at the head of this detachment, having had more than five hundred cannon shots fired at it on the first day, it was not long before it asked to surrender. Castelnaut was quite willing, but his idea being that the garrison should remain prisoners of war, an agreement would never have been come to, had the Vicomte de Turenne not sent to tell him to come to terms.

This château having thus capitulated, M. de Turenne had it razed to the ground and then marched against the enemy, who appeared to regret not having given us battle, when we had been marching to the relief of Saint Venant. They entrenched themselves behind the river Colme, which was too strong a position for us to attack. They next committed a great error, which was to abandon Bourbourg. The Vicomte de Turenne

immediately seized the opportunity and appointed the Comte de Schomberg (whom to-day the Portuguese esteem so greatly by reason of his spirited defence of their kingdom) as its governor. Bourbourg, under his orders, once more became a very strong town and we next took the fort of Mardik, in which place we left the English as a garrison. As this fort is very small to contain such a great number, and as, besides, the people in question are great meat eaters, such maladies broke out that a number of these soldiers died. The Spaniards seized the opportunity to try and recapture the fort, but the garrison, sick as it was, defended itself with enough vigour to give us time to leave our winter quarters and come to its help, upon which the besiegers retired.

All these fortunate successes were spoilt by the treason of the Maréchal d'Hocquincourt, who withdrew to the side of the Prince de Condé, and by that of the garrison of Hedin, who betrayed that fortress to the prince in question. For sometime past already the maréchal had become an object of suspicion to the Cardinal, so much so that his Eminence had never rested till he had withdrawn the governorships of Peronne and Ham from his hands. The minister had had to pay two hundred thousand crowns to get him to resign these posts, and in addition had promised the maréchal Peronne for his eldest son, a thing which had much troubled the Cardinal, for he was afraid of the son's following the example of his father. M. de Turenne, however, had gone bail for his fidelity, and, indeed, he was right to do so, for when his father the maréchal tried to tempt him and approached his fortress, the son opened fire upon his traitorous sire.

The fortress of Hedin had revolted on account of the refusal of the King to nominate a man called La Rivière to its governorship. He had asked for it after the death of M. de Bellebrune who formerly held it, but either because he was but a poor creature, or because the Cardinal wished to extract some money from the Marquis de Palloiseau, the son-in-law of the dead man who also aspired to obtain this post, La Rivière withdrew in as great a rage as it is possible to be. He had a brother-in-law called Fargues, who was Major of Hedin, and had hoped to obtain the Lieutenance de Roi, were La Rivière to be appointed governor. This man, who was touched as closely by the Cardinal's refusal as his brother-in-law, counselled the latter to obtain by force that which he had not been able to acquire by favour.

This was a great undertaking for a man like La Rivière, who was a contemptible individual, but Fargues, who had as much sense as his brother-in-law had little, having pointed out to him that he did not propose that he should declare himself an independent ruler, he eventually consented to send someone to M. le Prince to say that if he would grant him the governorship he would recognise no other sovereign. This the Prince willingly agreed to do, and, an agreement having been come to, it was kept secret until such time as the Cardinal, who had not been able to come to terms with the Marquis de Palloiseau had disposed of the post in favour of the Duc de Créqui, and when the latter tried to take possession he was refused the entry of the gates.

This affair made a great stir at Court and all over France as well. The Cardinal, who was as clever as

anyone else though not profound in mind, after having done his best to make this fortress return to its duty, and perceiving that he could not succeed, determined to play the enemy a trick. Our treaty with Cromwell made them very solicitous about Dunkirk and the other fortresses on the coast, on which they kept a very sharp look-out. The capture of Bourbourg and Mardik made our foes anticipate a speedy attack upon Dunkirk, and, to dissipate this idea, nothing else was talked of at Court but how to mete out to Fargues and his brother-in-law the punishment they deserved. A man was even sent expressly from Paris to obtain plans of Hedin as if it was about to be besieged, but by some chance the individual in question was captured whilst carrying out the orders given him. Fargues, who knew that he must make himself feared, especially at the beginning of things, unless he wanted to soon become a laughing stock, showed the man no pity and had him hung as a spy.

The poor wretch, who thus unwittingly found himself the victim of the Cardinal's policy, confessed, when about to die, that it was his Eminence who had sent him to obtain the plans—a circumstance which delighted the minister in question, because it seconded his designs. To further increase the suspicions of the enemy that it was in this quarter that the campaign would be opened, no sooner had the month of May arrived than he there assembled all the troops of his Majesty. The six thousand English who had taken part in the last campaign with our army, were to participate in this as well. They were up to their full strength, notwithstanding the great mortality which had decimated them, for recruits had made up their ranks :

indeed, they were finer troops now than at their arrival, because Lokard, one of the sons-in-law of Cromwell, was to command them in place of Reynolds. The report which began to be current that they were to be led against Hedin instead of Dunkirk, became so wide spread, that it began to pass for a certainty with most people. Neither Lokard nor his soldiers were pleased at it, but being afraid that if he should complain beforehand, he might be accused of being too credulous, this general suspended his judgment till he saw by experience what he was to think.

The Vicomte de Turenne was to again command our army that year, and having taken it straight to Hedin in order as the saying goes to kill two birds with one stone, that is to say, deceive the enemy and at the same time try and frighten Fargues, it happened that the English made such a disturbance that it was believed that they were about to break with us. This at least was what Lokard openly declared, threatening to return to England rather than allow his nation to be trifled with any longer. The Cardinal, who delighted in these sort of matters, because he was never so succesful as in rascality, far from revealing his secret, tried even to make out that the time taken up with this siege would do no harm to his interests. The reason he gave was, that there were not yet sufficient stores by the sea coast, but this did not seem sound enough to the Englishman to restore him to good temper. Accordingly, he began to curse and swear, as if oaths and imprecations would gain him his case. The Cardinal let him have his say, knowing this would not last long, and indeed he offered so much money to Fargues to redeliver his fortress to him that he would

have had to have been mad to have refused it. This he took good care not to do, and so, after having been unfaithful to the King, made no scruple about betraying M. le Prince, to whom he had just gone over.[1] He therefore made his terms with His Majesty and received at least two hundred thousand francs in ready money. Upon this, M. le Cardinal told Lokard that he would now see that he had been wrong not to believe him when he had wanted him to abandon such an undertaking, without reflecting that a clever man should always profit by an opportunity. Lokard had nothing to reply to this, perceiving that His Eminence had carried out a master stroke. The governorship of the fortress was given to the Duc de Créqui, and as the Vicomte de Turenne was one of his private friends and an intimate of his brother, whom he tried to push forward as much as he could, he sent the latter to Bethune (of which place he was the governor) on the pretext that his presence was necessary there. Nevertheless, he did this only to have an opportunity of doing him a service without raising any outcry, for it must be known that he was always detailing him for duties extraneous to his position, as if he was the sole individual capable of performing them, a course of conduct which had caused much discontent.

At this time the Vicomte de Turenne was regarded as the right arm of the kingdom, and so great was the confidence which Cardinal Mazarin reposed in him, that a word from his lips would overcome anything other people might say. Indeed, His Eminence, after

[1] Balthazar de Fargues nevertheless continued to serve the Prince de Condé. He was hung in 1665 by Louis XIV and his property, valued at four millions, confiscated.

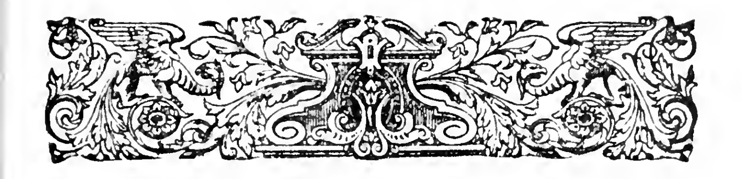
having married one of his nieces to the Comte de Soissons, son of the late Prince Thomas, was now offering his favourite niece Hortense to the vicomte in marriage, deeming that, as he had had no children by his wife, such a proposition would please him. However, the Vicomte de Turenne was of opinion that this proposal was just as hazardous as any warlike operation he had ever conducted. The lady was wide awake to an inconceivable degree. This was not the thing for a man who was over forty-five years of age: so preferring tranquillity to the great riches and benefits which such an alliance would give him, he let someone else commit this folly, who was not long in repenting of it. His behaviour surprised a good many people, especially as it was known that he was not rich and that the marriage would have done him good. But the conduct of this lady towards her husband gave him reason to console himself for not having taken her as his wife. Nevertheless, it is a question whether, in the scandals which soon arose in the household, the husband was not as much to blame as the wife.

But to return to my subject, the Vicomte de Turenne now directed his army straight towards Bergues, which city he was unable to approach by reason of the enemy having opened the dykes and the country being flooded everywhere nearly up to Dunkirk. This greatly hampered us, because it isolated the fort of Mardik, where we had storehouses for our army. The chief storehouses, however, were at Calais, which was a much more suitable place for such a purpose than a dirty hole like Mardik. By reason of the enemy being in possession of Gravelines, our stores at Calais were also

cut off from us. This being so, the Vicomte de Turenne, not knowing whence to obtain provisions, were he to attack Dunkirk, as had been agreed with Cromwell, sent word to the Cardinal, who had gone to Calais with the King, of the new difficulties he found himself confronted by. It was his opinion that it was above all necessary to attack Gravelines, for then communications would be opened up with Calais. This could not be done without the consent of Lokard, who was approached by the Comte de Guiche, because he had more influence over him than anyone else, for he and Lokard were wont to often indulge in debauches together. The English general, however, made reply that, although a friend of his, he must not reckon on obtaining what he desired. The Cardinal had been trifling too long for that. Either Dunkirk must be attacked, or he must be allowed to withdraw; no middle course was possible, and for this reason he would beg the Comte de Guiche not to mention the matter to him again.

Such a positive reply as this having convinced the Vicomte de Turenne that nothing more was to be hoped for in this direction, he called all the skill which his long experience of warfare had given him into play so as to surmount the difficulties which lay in his path.





II

THE siege of Dunkirk having been decided upon, the first act of M. de Turenne was to re-establish communications with Mardik, since he could no longer reckon on obtaining supplies from Calais. For this purpose he attacked a redoubt which the enemy had constructed upon the Colme. It was of considerable strength and defended by four pieces of cannon. Nevertheless, a piece of work like this was nothing for a man who possessed the secret of causing the strongest walls to collapse before him, and the garrison were soon obliged to abandon the position. His next act was to have a quantity of fascines made, with which he mended the roads which had been swept away by the inundation, and advanced towards the canal of Bergues in the direction of Dunkirk. The enemy, meanwhile, had been erecting a great fort which was as yet not quite finished, for they had reckoned that their redoubt would hold out for some time. Incomplete as it was, this fort impeded our march, for it contained a large number of men, and as its communications in the rear were unhampered, reinforcements could be poured into it as necessity arose. This rendered it almost impreg-

nable, and, with the intention of cutting its communications, some infantry were sent across the canal who, overcoming great difficulties, effected their purpose, which being done, the fort was captured after it had made a spirited resistance—its defenders escaping with some difficulty. The Vicomte de Turenne was now able to proceed, for on the other side of this fort the dunes were in their usual condition and the ground free from inundation.

The English, who had promised to send a fleet, already had twenty sail at sea which was more than enough to hold the Spaniards in check in that quarter, for their fleet was nothing like as powerful. The Vicomte de Turenne took up his quarters on the dunes near Nieuport, but could not make his trenches until such time as he felt himself secure from famine. Supplies having reached him, we began work on the trenches, hardly a shot being fired at us the whole night long. Bridges had previously been thrown over the canals and siege works constructed.

The Marquis de Leide, Governor of Dunkirk, was a man skilled in warfare, and had already defended that city, when we had attacked and taken it in 1646. For three days this governor allowed us to work in peace, as if forgetful of the fact that a besieged town never defends itself so successfully as by sallies. However, on the fourth day, he made an onslaught which showed us that he had not yet forgotten his profession. Fifteen hundred men took part in it—as many cavalry as infantry—and having thrown the trenches into great disorder, all would have been lost, had not the people of rank in our camp come up to risk their lives just as if they had been ordinary soldiers!

Their hardihood gave time to those who had retreated to return to the charge, and the Vicomte de Turenne having at once called out five hundred cavalry and two battalions of infantry, the enemy retired in good order fearful of being surrounded. Some persons of rank on our side were wounded in this skirmish, and others had their horses killed; a few were even made prisoners.

Among the wounded was the Comte de Guiche, who had his hand run through whilst behaving as a man of noble heart is expected to behave. There was no lord at court of greater worth than he, for he was the epitome of a perfect cavalier, possessing birth—a superior mind—learning quite remarkable in one of his rank—great bravery without swagger and, in short, all the qualities which are most admired. The only thing in him which could be criticised was, that he was like most learned men, who are not usually religious. He was much less pious than brave, which had already got him into trouble at Court, and has since done so again. Eldest son of the Maréchal de Grammont—he had the reversion of the post of colonel of the regiment of guards, which was one of the greatest there was. The Comte de Guiche had a brother who, although the handsomest man at Court, was deemed to be unfortunate by everyone on account of his elder brother being so brilliant that his defects were the more apparent.

Be this as it may, the sally of the enemy having been followed by several others, the Vicomte de Turenne had to increase the number of troops in the trenches and four or five days passed without further attacks. Meanwhile, we had to be on our guard in yet another quarter. The Maréchal d'Hocquincourt, who appeared with the intention of relieving Dunkirk, attacked a body

of our troops with a squadron which was just half as strong. Charging with extraordinary dash, he drove our men before him, a feat which spread consternation in our camp, and a report becoming current that the Comte de Soissons, colonel-general of the Suisses, had been taken prisoner, Molondin, colonel of that regiment, at once went to the attack with his soldiers. Employing some strategy he killed twenty of the enemy amongst whom was the Maréchal d'Hocquincourt himself, who received a wound in the stomach which caused his death in less than an hour, a space of time he employed in obtaining absolution of his sins from a confessor. Having been carried into a little chapel close by, he expressed his great sorrow at having taken up arms against his sovereign, and gave up the ghost a moment later in the arms of one of his gentlemen.

The Cardinal was not very much grieved at his death, for he feared him more than anyone else. Not that he was a clever man, far from it, but he was entirely guided by passion, and this it was which alarmed his Eminence, who knew that with people of this disposition there is no safety.

The day after this skirmish the enemy, who had constructed bridges over the canal of Furnes, passed over them and marched on to the dunes in battle array. The Vicomte de Turenne, who was of opinion that the party who commenced an attack has a great advantage, prepared to give battle, after having left Pradel to defend the trenches with fourteen hundred men of our regiment and marins, a lieutenant-general being in charge of the camp, with six hundred horse and fifteen hundred foot.

Though Lokard was in command of the English who were with us and his relationship as son-in-law of Cromwell made him inalienably attached to his interests, he had not sufficient authority over his men to prevent them from every day saying that the Protector had acted very wrongly to choose a doubtful thing, such as was the capture of Dunkirk, to a certainty, which was what the Spaniards offered if he should be willing to declare for them. Indeed, they never ceased to grumble, which caused the Vicomte de Turenne some uneasiness, for he knew their uncertain temper. In any case, these soldiers having managed to learn the order of battle which had been arranged, and having discovered that no post of honour had been assigned to them (their place being in the centre), they insisted on having one, threatening that otherwise they would not fight. This was their usual way and in the time of Charles I. they had played him the same trick at the battle of "Nasebi," which had caused his destruction. True is it that they had then been right, for the post of honour was their's much rather than that of the Scotch who claimed it. However, on this occasion it was an insufferable piece of vanity to attempt to lay down the law to a whole nation like the French, and in their own country too! For this reason the Vicomte de Turenne, wise and moderate as he was, speaking to Lokard, gave him to understand that the demands of his men were unjust and had no chance of being granted. To this Lokard, who had never been engaged in warfare, gave as sole answer in place of any good reasons, that the only thing the French nation could claim above his own was to have the right wing, which would be relinquished to it, but both the left and right which

they appeared to claim would never be conceded. His contingent was important enough to be considered, and therefore he could not abate his claims unless he himself were to betray his country.

When he spoke thus he was speaking more for his men than himself, for they did not scruple to declare that they would not fail to disobey him were he to yield, for they were afraid of his being won over. At last Lokard having explained the situation he was in to M. de Turenne, the latter, for fear of worse happening, agreed to the demands of the English. The regiment de Picardie (which is on another footing to that which it is on to-day, though after the Guards it still has precedence over all other regiments) opposed this with all its strength, but M. de Turenne, who was usually not too gentle with his soldiers, having had recourse to prayers and supplications, and having talked to them as a father to his children, the regiment eventually agreed to forego its pretensions.

This difficulty having been thus overcome and nothing now standing in the way of a battle, the enemy were observed to be trying to avoid a combat. Such a thing appeared surprising after their advance, which, however, they had made merely with the intention of giving courage to the besieged, and besides, they had not as yet any heavy artillery, which they expected to arrive every minute. This M. de Turenne got news of from a page of the Marquis d'Humières, who was then lieutenant-general, and who is to-day Maréchal de France. This page, who had been taken prisoner in the skirmish in which the Maréchal d'Hocquincourt had been killed, had escaped from the Spanish camp in which he had been allowed to go to

and fro by reason of his youth. Nevertheless, he had made such good use of his time that the Vicomte de Turenne from his reports not only determined more than ever to give battle but further, to do so at once.

Meanwhile, some discontent was manifested by the lieutenant-generals who accused M. de Turenne of singling out certain of their number to the prejudice of others. At last everything was arranged, and the army passed the night from the 13th to the 14th under arms ready to attack at dawn. The enemy learnt of our intentions through their spies, and though their cannon had not arrived and they lacked some infantry besides, they did not fail to show a bold front. Dom Juan took command of their right wing and left the left to M. le Prince. The Vicomte de Turenne spent the whole night stretched on the dunes with his nose in his cloak. M. le Prince did the same as did all the general officers on both sides.

Day having broken, M. de Turenne made us leave our lines and march direct against the enemy. Those on the right wing did not see those on the left by reason of the dunes, so, Castlenaut having been a little quicker than our right, began the fight. By good luck for myself I had not been included in the detachment left with M. de Pradel to guard the trenches; I was in the battalion in the front line on the right of all the infantry. We marched with little enough room because we were cramped on our right by *Watergangs*,[1] and the Marquis de Créqui, to give us space, made the regiment of Bretagne cross these 'Watergangs' so that, leaving the centre, they found themselves

[1] *Watergangs*. Dutch for "sluices."

on the flanks. M. le Prince, who was ignorant of our being pressed closely together and that the manœuvre had but been carried out to gain space, thought that this regiment had only been posted in its new position to take him on the flank when the two armies should meet: so, having ordered one of his battalions to copy the evolution, we advanced towards him without his attempting to shorten the distance. Far from it, he ordered his forlorn hope to charge, with orders to fire only at the last extremity. They carried out this command very badly, and we were yet forty paces away when they began to fire. They were so disturbed at the idea of entering upon this battle without cannon as to be already half-beaten. Consequently, having run at top speed after their volley, and a portion of their cavalry having done the same thing, we marched against the remainder of the army as to a certain victory.

M. le Prince clearly perceived from such a bad beginning that all was lost for him, unless he should find means to put things right by his firmness. As yet he was unaware that the wing commanded by Dom Juan had been beaten: accordingly, putting himself at the head of a squadron he told Bouteville, Coligny, and some other persons of rank, who followed his fortunes, to copy his example and instil courage into those who had lost it, but his troops were already so demoralised that all they could do was to follow with another squadron. This was very little wherewith to dare attack an entire army, but, as the ease of our victory had caused the victors to themselves proceed without order, the attack proved so spirited, that these two squadrons put more than eight of ours to flight! Our

battalion, which was marching in better order than our cavalry, having observed the fury with which the prince was pursuing these fugitives, stopped short, so as to shoot more accurately when he should approach us. And indeed we succeeded none too badly, since we sighted his ranks so accurately that our fire caused more than half his men to fall. He himself had his horse killed under him, so that he would have been taken prisoner had not a trooper given him his steed to escape with. Bouteville, Coligny, and some other persons of rank on his side did not get off so cheaply; most were taken and wounded. The Vicomte de Turenne had the others pursued up to the canal of Furnes. Their haste to escape caused a great number to be drowned. Those who did not hurry so much saved their life at the expense of their liberty. Dom Juan had decided his course of action early in the day, and so did not find himself in such a predicament. Indeed, after seeing the first squadron broken and the English fleet firing on the flank he retired to Nieuport.

This battle was not one of those which last from morning till night and recommence the next day, such as M. le Prince himself had taken part in. Four hours were all which sufficed for the beginning and end of this great day, so much so that we had all returned to camp at four o'clock, with the exception of those detailed to pursue the fugitives.

The Vicomte de Turenne, so as to profit by his victory, had the governor of Dunkirk summoned to surrender that very day. He could not be ignorant of what had taken place, since the battle had been fought under his eyes, but he made reply that, if Dom Juan had done his duty in wishing to

relieve him, he had thus taught him that he must do his by defending himself to the last extremity. This was the answer of a brave man and of one not easily frightened, but Lokard had given an even finer one the eve of the battle. M. de Turenne having sent him word that he had resolved to give battle, and he would tell him the reason if he would come and see him, he had replied that he had every confidence in him and it would be enough for him to know it, when he had returned from the fight.

The Marquis de Leyde having returned this reply, and taken all possible measures to defend himself, Castelnau, who for a long time had been anxious to obtain the baton of a Maréchal of France and who well deserved one, remained constantly in the trenches, so that he might have as much share in the success of this siege as he had had in aiding in the victory we had just won. However, five days later, whilst inspecting a new outwork erected by the Governor of Dunkirk, he received a musket shot in the stomach. He caused himself to be at once transported to Calais, where the Court was; for, as it had not been concealed from him that his wound was a mortal one, he was desirous of seeing whether, when dying, he could not obtain that which had been refused him during his life. The King did him the honour of paying him a visit, and the Cardinal having accompanied him, this poor wounded man begged his Majesty to give his family, who were about to lose all by his death, the consolation he desired. The King, who would do nothing without the Cardinal, for, young as he was, he already possessed sufficient prudence as to think that at his age he ought to do nothing without the advice of his

minister, made no reply and let the Cardinal speak. His Eminence had always stoutly refused this honour to Castelnau, but eventually, moved by the arguments of M. de Tellier, who pointed out that there could be no harm in granting the wish of one so soon to die, he gave way and the dying man was made a Maréchal of France twenty-four hours before his death, which was something to console his widow though it did him no good, since, notwithstanding this dignity, he became food for the worms just as much as if he had never obtained it.

A day or two later, the Marquis de Leyde was wounded whilst encouraging an Italian regiment. This shook the courage of the garrison, and as he got worse and worse to that extent that he died before long, this further discouraged his men. Whilst a breath of life remained to him he would hear no talk of surrendering, so that he might be buried with honour, but hardly were his eyes closed when the fortress yielded. Monsieur de Turenne gave it over to Lokard, who placed most of his English in it as a garrison. The whole of France, which perceived that this was just as dangerous to us as if the Spaniards had kept possession of it, blamed His Eminence for allowing such a thing: but it is easy to criticise and difficult to see how he could have acted differently.

The King came expressly from Calais, to see the garrison of Dunkirk march out. It consisted of thirteen hundred men, without counting a number of sick and wounded, who had to be taken in carts to Nieuport. Two days later, we laid siege to Bergues, and the King himself, who was desirous of seeing some fighting, came to the camp. Wishing to reconnoitre the for-

tress, His Majesty approached so close to it that the bullets not only whistled about his ears but passed quite close to his head. He had advanced quite alone, whilst two squadrons of guards detailed to protect him had halted two hundred paces away. According to the rules of war they should not have been at this distance, but his Majesty had himself stationed them there with orders not to stir. The Court was following the King some distance away, and the Maréchal du Plessis who was the tutor of his Majesty, having hastened up to him to say that he had without thinking advanced too far forward, he did it so heartily that he could not prevent himself from using an oath. With all the coolness of an old campaigner, the King replied that he had no idea of putting him in such a rage. Pleurisy was a dangerous thing at that time of year, so he must satisfy him for fear of overheating him and causing a cold. At the same time his Majesty slowly returned, well pleased at heart with the maréchal on account of his solicitude for his safety.

On his return to the camp, the King told the Vicomte de Turenne the result of his reconnoitring, and the general finding his observations very sound, told M. le Cardinal his opinion of them. His Eminence was delighted at this because, as he had undertaken the bringing up of his Majesty, any praise of his qualities must redound to his own glorification. Nevertheless, with the exception of having had him taught the science of fortification, he had caused him to learn little else. He had given him no master to teach him the things which a great prince such as he should have learnt: on the contrary he had copied the monkeys, who suffocate their young by caressing them; for, on the pretext of

protecting his health, he had brought him up in such idleness that, had his Majesty had evil inclinations, he would have turned out a very bad king indeed, but thanks be to God, his happy disposition proved stronger than all the bad training given him, so that, without the help of anyone, he has made himself what we see him to-day.

The only reason the Cardinal had allowed His Majesty to be taught fortification was because he thought that that science would rather second his interests than injure them. War was necessary to him to continue to fill his purse, which was yet so full that no scales were strong enough to hold it up! Indeed, he wished the King to know everything which might be useful to his own interests, but nothing which might teach him to govern unaided. For this reason he kept him isolated from fear of his learning the truth. He was especially afraid of any people likely to be good advisers whom the King was observed to rather favour, and would immediately try to ruin them in His Majesty's estimation on some specious pretext, such as declaring that they were debauchees or blasphemers,—qualities to which this young sovereign bore a mortal hatred, a further mark of his natural good sense and wisdom.

It was by these methods that His Eminence inspired the King with a sort of aversion to the Comte de Guiche, whom he had previously rather liked. He made him believe all sorts of bad things about him, preferring that he should attach himself to men like La Feuillade and others of his sort, though keeping a good watch over them. Amongst his spies was Barthet, who, sprung from the dregs of the people, had made

a good fortune, and many others, including a first gentleman of the chamber and a captain of the Guards; indeed, the King was surrounded by a queer company, and the Cardinal was so well aware of it that he would say rather rashly, that of all nations in the world he knew no people so servile as the French people, who could be made to do everything for money to such an extent as to devote themselves to whoever would give them any.

However, all this but served to eventually enhance the fame of his Majesty who, with no other help than his own disposition, has become what we to-day see him. Nevertheless, it was easy enough to already perceive what his future would be, if one troubled at all to observe him. His sole delight was to be on horseback and among soldiers, which were his only occupations. In spite of this, there were many other things calculated to tempt him. The queen-mother had some ladies in waiting, who were the most beautiful women in France, but most of them bore such evil reputations as to repel a decent man, and much more so a great king. All the same, they did all they could to attract His Majesty but, from fear of his being caught, as was almost inevitable at his age, the Cardinal set him against them by extraordinary stories. According to him, they were all Messalinas. He might have been speaking the truth as to their inclinations, for to tell the truth they were reputed to be willing enough to play such a part, but as for such really being the case, that was quite another thing. As they had to be careful, if they erred, their misbehaviour was only in thought. Besides the Queen looked too closely after them to give them any chance. Meanwhile, the Cardinal had acted so that His Majesty

had fallen back upon his neices. He was fond of two at the same time—to wit Olimpe, who afterwards married the Connétable de Colonne, and the Comtesse de Soissons. The latter did not however long continue in favour, being supplanted by her sister. The Cardinal looked not unkindly at this affair, thinking he would make himself master of his niece's mind and oblige her to report to him the most trifling thoughts of His Majesty. The girl, however, would be governed by no one but the King himself, and as the Cardinal had no experience in gallantry he did not know exactly how to act. In spite of this he no sooner saw how matters were going than he prevented that which his niece's inordinate passion gave him reason to fear and the King not daring to say anything, though he disliked restraint, his relations with the girl remained purely formal. Everyone admired his moderation, which went as far, so to speak, as yielding obedience to one he should command, but he had been brought up with such feelings of respect for His Eminence that they were more like those which a son is bound to bear his father than anything else.

The King, after having come to the camp of Bergues, as I have just said, returned in the direction of Mardik, which he was having fortified. He, like his minister, had become aware that he had harboured a queer neighbour when he had given Dunkirk to Cromwell, and it was for this reason that Mardik was being fortified and the other fortresses near Dunkirk placed in a condition of defence, for thus, should Cromwell chance to change sides, his communications with the Spaniards would be interrupted. With this purpose in view, His Majesty did not lose a minute, and as he was perpetually

on horseback he was all of a sudden seized with such a prodigious fever that he had to have himself carried to Calais. The same day we took Bergues, but the state of his Majesty's health stopped the Court from appreciating this fresh conquest at its true worth.

The whole army knew of the King's illness next day, and though it was reported very severe (as without doubt it was) we all of us thought either that it was being purposely exaggerated (as is usually the case with everything) or that, the person of His Majesty being so precious, greater alarm was felt on his account than would have been had anyone else been the sufferer. It did not therefore stop us from going to attack Dixmude, which surrendered without striking a blow. The Vicomte de Turenne, who had caused the governorship of Bergues to be given to the Comte de Schomberg[1] as a man able to keep the English within bounds, were we to come to blows with them, asked for the governorship of Dixmude for me by my request. His Eminence made answer that he had other views as to my future and was meanwhile so afflicted at the King's condition that, should it last longer, he would have to be buried before him. There was some reason for this, for His Majesty continued so ill that despair was beginning to prevail as to his recovery. This was why His Eminence, who did not think himself so secure in the good graces of Monsieur as in those of the monarch, sent the Comte de Moret (eldest brother of De Wardes) to see what help he could obtain from his friends in the present predicament. I do not know what his idea was, and whether he desired that an attack should be made upon

1 The Comte de Schomberg, who afterwards became Duc, was killed at the battle of the Boyne.

Monsieur, so that he should keep him on in his ministry in the event of the kingdom changing its master. Be this as it may, this comte, having brought back the reply which interested me, when coming to conduct his plots, handed to me in person a letter from His Eminence. He wrote me the same thing as he had done to the Vicomte de Turenne, adding that I should sound my comrades as to what they thought of M. le Prince, and let him know those on whom he could rely if God should dispose of His Majesty.

I did not know how to acquit myself of this mission, which I deemed a dangerous one, especially considering the rumour which prevailed that all was up with this great prince (Louis XIV.) and he could not recover. Nevertheless, as I still had confidence in his youth and in Heaven's not being willing to deprive us of him, for he had every appearance of being some day one of the greatest kings whom France had ever had, I let myself yield to his wishes. Pradel, Pollac, Césan, Busserolles, and some others, gave me their word that they would be for him against everyone else. These were the "swells" of our regiment, though better men existed. Accordingly, not doubting but that he would be well pleased to know the success of the negotiations confided to me, I informed him by a note of which the ensign of my company named Fleury was the bearer. He was the son of a gentleman of Normandy called Bocet du Bois, who had a regiment of infantry, and who had found means to gain himself an income of twelve or thirteen thousand livres by a merry enough method. On leaving his house to take the field, one would have said, judging from his train, that some general was starting. At least three or four carriages,

as many carts, and I do not know how many mules followed in his train. Nevertheless, all these were empty, and only the mules carried bacon and hams; as for the carriages and carts he sent them to Rheims to be laden with wine, but it was not he who drank them nor made other people drink from them. He had them sold by his servant at so much the pot, and when it was gone, sent to get more, when some convoy was going towards the frontier. These manœuvres lasted to the end of the campaign, and after this, tapestries from Brussels and Oudenarde were brought to him, which he passed into France without paying any dues. There was a great sale for them in Paris where they were very dear because we had not then yet, as we have to-day, manufactories of this kind of merchandise either at Gobelines or Beauvais. This is how he got into a comfortable position, being at the same time colonel, sutler and merchant!

If the Cardinal plotted in this way to gain himself friends for the time when necessity should arise, there were other people who did no less to checkmate him, in case we should come to changing our master.

Madame de Choisi, wife of the Chancellor of Gaston de France, Duc d'Orléans, vexed at seeing herself shelved, now that that prince had given up the game to retire to Blois, had made the intendant of M. le Prince come with her, to see what measures they should mutually adopt at such a delicate juncture. He was a servant out of place like herself, now that his master had left the kingdom. They both consequently reckoned that, should the King chance to die, it would not be difficult for them to bring back their master and have the Cardinal driven away. The Duc de Brissac

and de Gersé also entered into their views: the first, because the Queen had deprived him of the baton of captain of the gardes du corps, which she had previously given him, to bestow it on someone else; the second, because he was annoyed at being treated without any consideration, on the pretext that on different occasions he had openly embraced the party of Gaston and of the Prince de Condé. They so thoroughly believed that the King would not escape death that they spread the report of the speedy return of M. le Prince through Paris. Not that His Eminence went to sleep: the measures he had taken with regard to the army clearly showed the contrary, but as he was perpetually at the King's bedside where he wept just like a woman at the sight of the peril he was in, he thought that, provided the soldiers were with him, all else would not be of much consequence. Meanwhile, he was clever enough to have the letters passing through Flanders stopped, and so got to know what was on foot against him at the Luxembourg. Madame de Chorsi lodged in this palace, and these gentlemen came to see her there incognito, some by one door some by another. The King still remained in danger, and one day he was even thought to be dead, so much so that the curtains of his bed were opened, as is the custom when someone has just passed away. Nevertheless, this happily proved not to be the case: on the contrary, the King felt better a moment later, and as youth soon recovers, it merely required a few days for him to become completely restored to health.

The letter intercepted by the Cardinal was from Perrant to M. le Prince. It was written in cipher and addressed to a man named Louis de Groves, a merchant

at Brussels, which was a fictitious name. A certain individual called the "the Spaniard," whom the Cardinal de Richelieu had created official decipherer, made its contents known to the Cardinal. His Eminence kept his resentment to himself till such time as he thought fit to show it. Meanwhile, he sent the King back to Paris and remained on the frontier. He then sent word to me to join him at Calais, and having gone there, he made me cross over to England to ask Cromwell to carry out the treaty which he had made with us. He had already caused M. de Bordeaux, who continued to be ambassador, to take this step, but Cromwell had rejoined that he did not know what his Eminence had to complain of. He did not dispute that it had been agreed to deliver Dunkirk over to the King for three millions, but this had been on condition they were paid within a certain time, which had passed when they were offered to him, and consequently, it was wrong to now try and declare that he had broken his word.

Cromwell would give me no other reasons than these, when I went to see him, adding that it was bad taste to grudge him one fortress, considering the twenty others he was going to make us capture with his troops. Without his help we should be unable to besiege the other neighbouring seaports, so that all we could accuse him of was helping himself first, whereas we had taken the elder brother's portion. I therefore returned without having succeeded, and found M. le Cardinal still at Calais. On hearing the result of my voyage he bade me keep silence about it, for it was a good thing that everyone should believe him to be on good terms with Cromwell. I replied that I, thank God! knew how to hold my peace, nor did I think he had ever

observed me do otherwise! To this he rejoined that he was pleased with me but was uncertain as to whether I was equally pleased with him. Still, even if I were not, I soon should be, for before long he would give me such a position as would cause me to be envied by many people.

These fine promises were founded upon his having at last come to an arrangement with Treville. The latter, after having done everything to have his company re-established in his favour, becoming fatigued at his ill success, had agreed with His Eminence to consent to the Duc de Nevers re-establishing it, in consideration of his younger son becoming cornet, a promise to the elder (who was destined for the church) of the Abbey of Montirandé after the death of his uncle, and finally the governorship of the county of Foix with the reversion to his younger son. I thanked the Cardinal in advance for the favours he was about to bestow on me, and having set out to go to the siege of Gravelines, which had just been resolved upon by His Eminence, the Vicomte de Turenne, and the Maréchal de la Ferté, I had no sooner arrived there than the Comte de Moret was killed by a cannon shot. Wardes, who was his brother, succeeded to his property, which was considerable, and would have pushed his fortunes even further than he has done had it not been that, after having become a sort of favourite of the King's, he became also the lover of the Comtesse de Soissons. This lady, eager to revenge herself on the King, who had abandoned her for her sister, involved him in a terrible affair, for which he is still in exile. His Majesty has, nevertheless, had the goodness not to take away from him as yet his post of captain of the "Cent Suisses" nor his

governorship of Aigues-Mortes: but as a life far from Court is the most cruel thing in the world to a courtier, he has had plenty of time to do penance in, so that he must repent of having been a better lady's man than servant of his King.

However, to return to my subject, and not to allow myself to wander as I have just been doing. It must be known that hardly had I remained two days before Gravelines than I received orders from M. le Cardinal to follow him to Compiègne, for which he was ready to start. The King had gone to that place at the end of his severe illness, and we had no sooner arrived there than His Eminence told me that what he wanted to do for me was to give me the post he had promised a long time ago; I must go and see the Duc de Nevers, and make my arrangements to go to Lym with the company of musketeers which was to accompany the King. I had, unknown to myself and the Cardinal too, a competitor for this post. This was Debas, whom I have before spoken of. He had been made tutor to the Duc de Nevers when leaving Flanders, and this was the recompense which he had received for having left the party of M. le Prince, whom he had previously served under with distinction, and joined that of the Cardinal. He had been on a footing with M. le Prince to receive the first governorship which should fall vacant, and expected no less from the Cardinal who had indeed promised him wonders to win him over. Whenever any post had been vacant, Debas had renewed his demands for it but with no success. It is true that his Eminence had, by way of a sop, caused him to believe that he did not grant what he asked, because he could not dispense with his ser-

vices to his nephew, and had even softened any irritation he might feel by giving him some bills on the treasury from time to time. Nevertheless, as the Duc de Nevers had reached such an age that he no longer needed a tutor, Debas no sooner learnt that his Eminence destined the post I have mentioned for me than he asked for it. He obtained it of a sudden, and without my ever having known how it occurred. I was very astonished at it after his Eminence's frequent assurances, and tried to speak to him about it, as was reasonable, but all the answer I could obtain was that he had found himself bound, in spite of his own wishes, because, when one of his gentlemen, named La Chesnaye, had treated with Debas to cause him to return to his allegiance, he had promised him this post.

As one cannot answer a minister and must yield to all his wishes, I had to be patient with His Eminence. It is true that, to alleviate my sorrow, he made me the finest speeches in the world. Nevertheless, nothing consoled me so much as the trouble he took to show me he had acted in good faith towards myself. On this subject he told me that he would ask me alone to be judge, since I could not doubt that, had his intention been evil, he would not have made me come expressly from the army to play me such a trick. Moreover, I should lose nothing by waiting, and he would give me his word as a cardinal on that! I do not know if he was promising too much when he swore this oath. I had never heard it said that the good faith of a cardinal was a thing upon which one could place too great reliance. On the contrary, I had heard that from the moment people become cardinals they begin to show themselves false to their real masters. Indeed, a man

whom the Pope invests with this dignity at once swears that he will be attached to him to the prejudice of everyone else, which nevertheless cannot be, since the claims of birth bind one to one's prince in quite another way than does a favour to the man who grants it. Be this as it may, taking care to keep my thoughts to myself, I asked the Cardinal to grant me a pension whilst I was awaiting any favour he might think fit to bestow upon me, so as to give me the means to live more comfortably than I was doing. To this he rejoined that I was choosing a bad time to make such a request. The King's coffers were entirely exhausted, so that were he to accord me what I asked I should not find a sou wherewith to be paid.

Having dismissed me in this way, he added, either because he perceived I was displeased or because he wished to give me a bone to gnaw, that he could not conceive how I, a man of sense, did not intrigue more than I did to obtain some valuable information. There were persons at Court who lived solely on that, and lived so well that he did not understand why it did not make others desirous of imitating them. I might well have answered, had I cared to do so, that all who gave information did not profit by it. To this end I had but to mention my dealings with himself, but, mindful that we must not follow the profession of courtier without knowing how to sometimes dissimulate, I behaved exactly as if I had lost all remembrance of that incident. Accordingly, without in any way mentioning it, I contented myself with the reply that everyone was not fit for that kind of thing. Luck often did more than all the cleverness one might make use of: besides which, were it a matter of finance, one must be a friend of the

"Surintendants" to promise oneself a successful issue. The Cardinal retorted that when one had the minister for a friend, as I might be sure was my case, there was no necessity to look for any other. I made him a fine bow by way of thanks for this speech, and replied that, as he was promising me the honour of his protection, I would set to work to procure some presents for myself.

Accordingly, I began to look about for some valuable information, and discovered something which seemed to me excellent. Twenty-five thousand crowns were due to the late M. de Charnasse—his salary as ambassador. His son was a Lieutenant in the Gardes du Corps, and though as alert as possible about his own interests, had moved heaven and earth to get paid this sum without any success. Chancing to find myself one day dining in company with him at the Grand Chamberlain's, he spoke of the matter as if it was a desperate one, and said that he had ceased to think of it. I rejoined that he was wrong to "throw the handle after the hatchet" as he was doing, and that what did not happen one day would be done the next. At the same time I asked him what he would give to the person who should get him paid his money, and added that I knew a man who would infallibly carry the matter through for him. In reply, he said that I might very well be wrong, so that, though I spoke of this as a certainty, he would not believe me till I should have told him who this so powerful individual was. As for himself, he knew of no one on earth who possessed the power I spoke of, not excepting the King, because, after the efforts he had already made, he at present believed success to be an impossibility. I laughingly retorted that he must then have but a very bad opinion of the

power of His Majesty since he included him in the number of persons who were powerless: to which he made answer that if I wished him to speak frankly to me, he would say that in this affair he did not believe him to be more powerful than anyone else. Only the Cardinal could carry it through, but as it would be asking him to forfeit his honour to mention it to him, he would not consent to a single word being breathed to him. I replied that nevertheless it was to His Eminence I should apply, if he would let me know the reward he would offer in return for the success of his suit. I was certain of not being refused, but as it would be by way of acquitting a debt, I must know what I was to get after he should have received his money. Shaking his head as if still incredulous, he said that there would be no use in wasting money on the thread for sewing the bags into which this money was to go: for he well knew that it would never dirty the hands of either of us, and so we need not prepare the water to wash them with.

Charnasse having spoken a good deal in a similar strain, tried to convince me that, if I was looking for a present, I must adopt better means than these to discover one, but on my continuing to insist that he had but to employ me, and he might perhaps see a greater miracle than he dreamt of, he told me that since I was so obstinate as to remain in my blindness in spite of him, it should be no fault of his that I did not overcome it, and as it was only necessary to name the reward, he would divide the cake with me or even give me two-thirds of it if I wished, since the one would cost him no more than the other, as neither of us would ever get one sou. I clearly perceived from his words that he continued to

remain incredulous, and as I was less so than he, I declared that whatever he might say I should not consider myself beaten until I had really made sure that such was the case. I would not, I added, take the two-thirds he offered me, as that was not just, nor even the half, because it would be selling a word too dearly, but as the third part did not seem to me exorbitant I would willingly take that provided he would promise it me in good faith. Not only, said he, would he do this, but with all his heart, and, as I would have it so, I had better put the irons in the fire, but must not blame him should I be discomfited. I answered that in any case I should not be so unjust as to blame anyone but myself were I to fail, which I hoped I should not do; at any rate, the long and short of the matter would be made known very soon.

This being agreed, I at once went to M. le Cardinal and told him that I had profited by his advice, and it but lay with him to cause me to gain twenty-five thousand francs, to which he made reply that he must look into the matter, for mayhap, like many others, I might be wrong in my calculations. This I stoutly denied, and proceeding to explain my business to him he burst into a fit of laughter and told me that what I called valuable information was the last thing in the world which deserved such a name. I must, he added, not know what "information" was, to speak as I did, for what was called by that name was anything which brought in money to the treasury and not that which took it away. Apparently I thought it all plain sailing, because the King owed this sum of money. I must know that if his Majesty were to pay all his debts there would be no worse plight than his in all the kingdom!

After such an answer there was nothing more to be said, and being too confused to go and return to Charnasse after having swaggered as I had done to him I awaited a time when I should not be able to help telling him what had occurred. This soon came. As we both belonged to the same master our meetings were frequent, and the next day we met in the guard room. I would have avoided him had I been able, but reflecting that sooner or later I should have to tell him, I prepared for the rebuff which I expected: so going laughingly up to him I said that it was clear that those who were at the door did not know as much as those who went into the room; that he had been right in telling me that M. le Cardinal would not meet my wishes, for he had refused me point-blank. He began to laugh when he heard this, and replied that, when I had boasted of succeeding in that which he himself had not been able to do, I had apparently been ignorant of his being one of the good friends of M. Fouquet, whom he accordingly had not failed to desire to utilise, but that, as he knew the ground better than anyone, he had at once made answer that were this his only means of livelihood he might make up his mind to go and beg his bread. More had not been needed to make him reckon it hopeless. I might well have seen, from his way of speaking and his reception of my proposal that this was his sole idea.

Debas, who was already old and quite worn out by the hardships he had undergone in war, did not retain his post long, and thereby gave M. le Cardinal an opportunity of manifesting his goodwill towards me. His Eminence gave it to me, and added to this favour a present of two fine horses from his own stable and of

the colour which I was obliged to have to serve in in my new post. As sole return for this he asked me to get his nephew to acquire a taste for the profession of arms. Such a request was to ask me to act against my own honour and interests, for I felt unbounded delight at the contempt the Duc de Nevers seemed to have for his post, and I should, so to speak, sink into insignificance the moment he took the trouble to do his duty. Indeed, I had the honour of speaking every day to the King who took quite a special interest in this new company. He himself gave me his orders about everything which was to be done without having them passed on to me by the duc, because he knew that he considered such a thing beneath him. For this reason I am sure he would have at once cashiered him, had it not been for his uncle. Be this as it may, being grateful enough to his Eminence to look after his interests to the prejudice of my own, I proceeded to show my gratitude I told the duc that, however great a lord one might be, one must yet always remain of no importance if not on good terms with one's master. That M. le Cardinal had already given him a great deal, besides an important post with an extraordinary facility of access to his Majesty, and had even spoken in his favour to the King. All this, however, would count for nothing did he not help himself. I had no desire that he should rely upon my word alone: let him glance at the nephews of Cardinal Richelieu, and he would see that, owing to the course they had chosen to take, they were nothing in comparison to what they should have been, considering their uncle's services. The eldest held a good post in which he did nothing—the second one, though he followed the profession of arms, was

held in but small esteem, because he preferred his pleasures to everything else, and finally the third, though he had already a great position, looked, unless I was mistaken, very like stopping where he was on account of his manifesting a disposition quite foreign to his profession.

The duc listened to me attentively enough, because he was well aware that what I said was by the order of M. le Cardinal. I consequently by bothering forced him to go for some days to the "lever" and "coucher" of the King. As it was for him to take the orders of his Majesty when present, he did so during this space of time, but either from annoyance at my being referred to when some detail was concerned, or as is more likely because he was not born for the restraint which has to be practised at Court, he soon returned to his original mode of life. Indeed, when any young people were with him he could not help speaking to them of the delights of Italy, and when he got upon the subject of the city of Rome he would always continue for an hour before he left off. He called it his dear fatherland —in short, it was easy to perceive from all he said that he reckoned all the pleasures of the Court and of Paris as nothing compared to its delights. I deemed that I ought to warn M. le Cardinal to point out to his nephew that this was not the way to become one day a Maréchal of France! For my part, I told him that if I might speak my mind I thought he was not acting too wisely in being so open before everyone. He might not perhaps be aware that at Court everything was reported to the King—there were a quantity of people whose only occupation was this, and so he must not imagine that they spared him more than anyone else because he was

the nephew of the minister. These persons chose their time to deliver their tongue-thrust in a manner that no harm should befall them. Besides, the King kept such matters secret, for otherwise people would not be willing to tell him anything more. Everything I could say was useless. After having gone to the Louvre for fifteen successive days, the duc went for a month without going. Meanwhile, M. le Cardinal established a company of musketeers on the model of that of the King, but did not dare give them horses after the fashion of his Majesty's company. Whilst awaiting this he contented himself with creating an infantry company. Nevertheless, in spite of his desire to make it smart and of other people's desire to please him, few men of quality entered it. This was the reason he begged the King to send the pages of the "grande" and "petite écurie" into it when they should come to years of discretion. But as it was on a bad footing and contained much riff raff, many of these young men preferred to retire to their homes rather than please his Eminence in this way.

The officers he appointed did not promote recruiting, for the two chief ones were nothing at all, and those who came after them are still not much, with the exception of Montbron, who is to-day colonel of the King's regiment and a brigadier of infantry. Nevertheless, his Eminence took some old troopers of the Regiment Cardinal and the Regiment of Mancini to place at the head of this company, which appeared a monstrous thing to people who knew their profession. Indeed, as all the officers of these new musketeers had never served except in the infantry, and a very short time in that, there was reason to be astonished that his

Eminence should wish the soldiers of this company to be of a different sort from the heads of it. The same course had not been taken with the company in which I had the honour to be an officer. The King himself had drawn some old soldiers from the regiment of guards—well made men and of great courage—to fill posts which in this new company the old troopers held, and as they themselves had not the means to furnish their equipment, so as to cut the necessary figure, he had helped them by the exercise of his generosity.





III

BESMAUX obtained a post about the same time as M. le Cardinal gave me this position. He had married the daughter of Pluvinel[1] whose profession it was to teach horsemanship. She was beautiful, and he had obtained some property with her. Both of these things worried him almost equally, for he was miserly and jealous. To possess a beautiful wife and money without making others envious of them, appeared no easy matter to him. Nevertheless, as he found himself in such a predicament, he did all he could to honourably extricate himself from it. He accordingly put his money into a strong coffer and did not let it leave it without good reason: had he been able to treat his wife in the same way, it would have been very convenient for him, especially in a country where it was not permissible, as it was in that of his master (Cardinal Mazarin), to make use of certain machines to protect himself against that which he feared.[2] But as this was even less allowable than the

1 This lady was apparently the granddaughter of the celebrated Antoine de Pluvinel de la Baume, was born in 1555, and died in 1620. He wrote a work on horsemanship for Louis XIII. which was embellished with 66 plates.

2 Being made a cuckold.

other, he bought his wife one of the biggest masks in Paris with a large face-cloth, and obliged her to always wear them upon her face. He reckoned that as love usually only makes its entry by the eyes, no one would fall in love with a mask, especially with this one, which was as like as two peas to that of an old woman.

However, it was enough for the world to know that he was afflicted with the malady I have mentioned for it to make no efforts to expedite its cure. There were people who were malicious enough to straightway proceed to make love to this mask, though they had never seen what was beneath it. Nevertheless, as misfortune has its uses, Besmaux found himself so bothered by always having to watch his wife that it originated an idea in his head which was the cause of his making his fortune. He reflected that were he able to put her into some château she would not be so exposed as at present to the blandishments of every sort of person. All the same he was very wrong to trouble himself so much for so little, since she was virtuous, and there is never any risk with anyone of this disposition. But as, no matter how chaste she might be, it was easier to cure him of the disease itself than the fright—he went to see some châteaux at ten or twelve leagues from Paris with the intention of buying one.

At that time properties were expensive, especially when they were no further from this great city than these were. This being the case, Besmaux being indisposed to agree to pay the price asked, chanced to go amongst some people, where he found a man named La Bachellerie, who held the governorship of the Bastille. One of the company happening to mention this

governorship and say that it was no bad commission to hold, La Bachellerie replied that he was very sick of it. The reason he alleged for this was that a good deal of money was owing to him for the feeding of the prisoners, which he was very much afraid would never be paid.

Besmaux, who was wide awake about everything which might be of use to himself, did not lose one syllable of this speech. He at once concluded that the Bastille would be more suited to his purpose than the château he had been trying to buy, because there would be guards there who would cost him nothing and whom, on the pretext of the King's service, he would only have to order to let no one come in or go out to be at once obeyed. Accordingly, he proceeded to draw up a petition for this governorship which he looked on as being vacant, considering that La Bachellerie only held it by commission, and was besides becoming disgusted with it, and having done so, laid it before his Eminence. This he did upon a day on which the Cardinal was about to enter his room after having returned from seeing the King. He did not mention what the petition contained, merely begging him to look at it at his ease as it concerned himself. His Eminence who was pleased enough with Besmaux, because he was a very crafty fellow, made answer that he would help him as far as he could, and then entered his chamber.

Besmaux then proceeded to look through the keyhole to see if the Cardinal would have the curiosity to read his petition. He said to himself, as he has since told me, that if his Eminence bore him any goodwill, he would not delay a moment before looking over it,

whereas were he to put it in his pocket or on the table, it would be a sign that he was no great friend of his. However, not only did he perceive him reading it, but further nod his head as one usually does when approving anything. His delight at this was indescribable, for he reckoned that all would now go well with his affairs, because he had been clever enough to set forth in his petition that he would indemnify La Bachellerie for the advances he had made since he had been at the Bastille. Nevertheless, such was not the intention of Besmaux, for he was not the man to so quickly disburse the eighty thousand francs which were owing,—a fact he was aware of since it was of this that La Bachellerie had complained in his presence. Be this as it may, the Cardinal who liked the King's debts to be paid provided that it was not he who put his hand in his purse at once summoned him to say that he would grant his request. M. de Guénégaud, Secretary of State of the King's household, who had the control of the Bastille (as M. Colbert, who has succeeded to his office, has to-day) was at once ordered to send Besmaux the patent.

La Bachellerie was extremely surprised when he saw himself dispossessed in this way, and hastened to the minister to ask him what crime he had then committed to be treated in such a manner. His Eminence, whom people had taken care to inform of these complaints, made reply that the King did not like to be served by people who complained that they were going to the workhouse through working for him. The poor man clearly perceived that he had said too much, and that the right moment had been chosen to play him this trick. He

made several attempts to be reinstated, but seeing he could not succeed he restricted his claims to asking that the King should repay him the advances made on his behalf. The Cardinal gave him no encouragement, for he was anxious that Besmaux should get off as cheaply as was possible. Nevertheless, the sum due was eighty thousand francs, but perceiving that he might never perhaps get anything at all, La Bachellerie was only too happy to take half. This Besmaux gave him on condition of being allowed to occupy his place.

Matters being thus arranged, Besmaux next tried to get himself reimbursed by the Cardinal and so have a further profit of eighty thousand francs in addition to the governorship, but his Eminence, who did not understand giving money away, especially when there was an excuse for avoiding doing so, gave him the answer that he appeared to be forgetting the conditions upon which he had asked for this post. Had he not declared that he would arrange matters with La Bachellerie, and had he already forgotten this? Consequently, it was all very fine for Besmaux to point out to him that this arrangement had no reference to the liquidation of the King's debts! He might just as well have said nothing at all as say so, since his Eminence would not listen. Meanwhile, what gave him more consolation for the loss of his money, was his putting his wife in this honourable prison, and his not wasting any time in paying himself the money back by means of cutting short the rations of the prisoners.

This poor woman had not the least expectation when her husband had been appointed governor, that she was about to become one of the people

whom he had orders to keep under lock and key. Much rather had she imagined that her future would be more pleasurable by reason of the large income which would accrue to her lord. However, he told her, in order that she might entertain no ideas of this kind, that he had need of her eyes as well as of his own to watch over the prisoners confided to his charge, and as she was beginning to present him with children, she must now also commence saving for them. On the pretext of these two reasons he would not allow her to go out except to attend mass at the "Filles de Sainte Marie" which is close by, nor would he let her indulge in the smallest extravagance. Further, she went out only with her great mask and great face-cloth just as if she had been very fearful of getting sunburnt. Two soldiers of the Bastille accompanied her even to her devotions, one on the pretence of giving her his hand, the other to surreptitiously watch that no one should stealthily speak to her, or that no note should be slipped into her hand. In short, never did mortal more deserve to be made a cuckold than Besmaux. Nevertheless, he did not meet with such a fate, my own opinion being that what God watches over is in safety, and in this respect he was more lucky than clever since by reason of his worrying his wife he well deserved to be deceived. But fortunately for him she was a virtuous woman—which in this century one does not meet with every day.

But to return to my subject. M. le Cardinal had no sooner given me the post about which I have just spoken, than I was overwhelmed with letters from my province, and from a thousand other places to obtain a musketeers' commission for a number of people who were recommended to me from all sides.

Bernajoux[1] of whom I have spoken at the beginning of these Memoirs, gave me his brother whom I presented to the King for his approval, for without it nothing could be done. For this reason I was not over willing to press the claims of all who were suggested to me. The King insisted that they should be well made, have some property and be men of good birth. All these three qualifications were not always to be found in the same individual especially in men of my province where, if the first and last are often met with, the other is as rare as it can possibly be. In spite of this it was the most essential of all in such a position where money had to be spent everyday if a man wished to continue in it. The King whose especial amusement was to put us through our drill himself, was wont to be every day ordering some new addition to our equipment, so much so that the very man who had used every endeavour to enter the company, would find himself so disgusted at the end of three months, that he would often be desirous of having the chance of not doing as he had done over again.

His Majesty would usually muster us in the courtyard of the Louvre in the depth of winter as in the height of summer. There he would stay for three or four hours together making us go through all the evolutions one after the other. He did not care for cold nor heat, whilst his courtiers often blew on their fingers to warm themselves or took their handkerchiefs from their pocket to wipe the sweat which ran down their faces. The King would next make us defile before him three or four times—brigade by brigade—and would then let

[1] See volume I page 19.

us go almost regretfully, such pleasure did he take in reviewing us. This should have made the Duc de Nevers bestir himself, but a great deal more would have been necessary to extricate him from his indolence: for this reason, as he still continued to behave in the same way, all the management of the company devolved upon me, and though I was but its sub-lieutenant everyone looked upon me as if I had already been its chief. This gained me great consideration from courtiers and even lesser ministers, such as Messieurs de Lionne le Tellier, Servient, and others. Not one of them failed to profess their friendship, and M. Fouquet, who continued to remain Surintendant des Finances, having reproached me with not visiting him nor having once dined with him, made me promise to do so shortly. I went the very next day, because he had invited me so courteously that I should have thought that I was rendering myself unworthy of the honour done me had I delayed one single moment. He kept on talking to me during nearly the whole of this meal, and then having taken me into his study said that, as my present position imperatively exacted the expenditure of much money, he was glad to tell me that whenever I should be in need of anything I must betake myself to no one but him. He would always have a thousand crowns quite ready for my use, and even a greater sum still should I want it. All he would ask by way of return would be my friendship, and that I should prove it when occasion arose. I received these marks of his goodwill in a fitting manner, and having tendered him my most humble thanks, he wished before we parted to add performances to promises. He earnestly urged me to accept a purse in

which were five hundred louis d'or, telling me that these were only an earnest of what he wished to do for me. However, I would have nothing to do with this from fear of taking a step displeasing to his Eminence, saying by way of excuse that I had no present need of money.

M. Fouquet would not take this answer until I had promised that I would have recourse to him whenever I should feel the need of so doing. I did not take much pressing, because it seemed to me that by this I was pledging myself to nothing, since I had only to always tell him that I was well in funds, although I was often enough very hard up. Accordingly, having parted very good friends, I, that very evening, perceived that M. le Cardinal eyed me askance on my having gone to pay him court, as was my usual practice. He would hardly look at me at all. I examined myself as to my behaviour to see if I had drawn this treatment upon myself through any fault of my own, and finding no cause for it I felt so confident in my own innocence, that I followed his Eminence into his closet just as he was about to retire into it quite alone. He was surprised on turning his head to see me behind him. The clerk had let me enter, thinking that the Cardinal had bidden me follow him, and the minister enquiring in a stiff manner what had made me dare to enter, considering I knew such a thing was not done without a special order, I made reply that it was my guiltlessness and the bad reception I had received from him which had caused me to take such a liberty. From his manner he must have something against me, and as I would rather die than lose his good graces, I had paid no attention as to whether entering his closet was allowed

or not. To this the Cardinal retorted that I was very rash to further add effrontery to my offence. He saw clearly that I thought myself a great man, but before long he would make me see that I had not as yet reached the altitude I imagined. His Majesty who had done him the honour to believe him by giving me my post in consequence of his recommendation might easily strip me of it when he should have learnt how little I deserved the esteem of honourable men, and by these means he would soon show me that ingratitude and its punishment were not far removed from one another.

Anyone else in my place might perhaps have been disconcerted at hearing the Cardinal talk in this way, but personally I was more pleased than grieved for now I felt sure of justifying myself directly he should clearly explain himself. This I begged him to do assuring his Eminence that without his having to go to the King to get me stripped of my post, I would not only place it in his hands, but my head in addition, were I to be found guilty. He replied that he had already told me that adding insolence to what I had already done was a very imprudent act. He would repeat this once again, and, to immediately put me to confusion, would enquire if I called it the act of an innocent man to enter into intimate negotiations with the enemy of his benefactor.

I admit that as yet I did not grasp his meaning. I was unaware that M. Fouquet and his Eminence were at feud, and also that to go and dine at a man's house was to enter into intimate negotiations with him. So true is it that, once one is at Court, every step must be taken with care! Be this as it may, knowing nothing

as I have said of this feud, I begged the Cardinal to be good enough to explain himself, to which he replied that it was all very well for me to pretend ignorance, but, as there are none so deaf as those that refuse to hear, all he had to ask of me was, whether I had not that day dined with M. Fouquet? I answered yes, but that I did not see any crime in my having done so, and at all events this was the first time I had ever set foot in his house. His Eminence rejoined that for one who was beginning a new acquaintanceship I was on no bad terms with M. le Surintendant; for his part it was not his custom to shut himself up in his study with guests who had come to dine with him for the first time. Yet this is what I had done with M. Fouquet, and he would ask me the meaning of such conduct?

From this speech I realised that when at Court nothing can be done without its being at once reported to the minister. Meanwhile, as trifling was not my intention, I frankly told the Cardinal exactly what had happened. He listened attentively, and when I had come to the affair of the purse and my refusal of it, I added, that in spite of what I had done, I could not need it more than I did at present since, had it not been for M. Boileve who lent me two hundred pistoles only twenty-four hours ago, I should not have known where to lay my head. This he might verify from that gentleman since he saw him every day. My refusal had arisen merely from a dread of committing myself further than it was my duty to do. Although the Surintendant was only a subordinate minister, as I was aware that he intended to give me the money rather than loan it to me, I had thought that I must be upon my guard with him, I would have his Eminence

to judge after this, whether he had grounds for suspecting me to be plotting against him as he had done. I had not been able to avoid receiving the civilities of M. Fouquet nor responding to them by a visit, because I was unaware how matters stood; but, now I knew, I would never give his Eminence reason for complaining of me on this or any other score.

The Cardinal was satisfied with my explanations, being especially pleased with my refusal of the purse. He now began to wish me to pay M. Fouquet another visit so as to spy upon him. This I begged him to excuse me from doing, pointing out that I was incapable of playing such a part. I added, that I would rather be sent to the enemy to do this, and though my life would be at stake, it would matter to me less than to let it be said that I had betrayed a man under the pretence of friendship. The minister could find no fault with this; so, having arranged with him that when M. Fouquet should speak to me again, I would frankly say that I could have no dealings with him, I was more pleased with such a line of conduct than the one he had before suggested to me. Some days later the surintendant did not fail to address me again, having come across me in the King's antechamber. Whilst passing me he said, without awaiting a reply, that I must be sure and go and see him for he had something of consequence to tell me. I reported this to the Cardinal, and after he had pondered a little he declared himself curious to know what the surintendant might have to say; he therefore desired me to pay him the visit.

I went in order to satisfy him, though I felt rather guilty at obeying in such a matter. However, I was

unable to avoid doing as he wished under pain of making him deem me devoid of gratitude, considering the obligations I was under to him. No sooner did M. Fouquet see me than he said that considering himself as one of my friends he would give me a piece of good advice. He knew from a good source that the King was displeased at the lack of attention which the Duc de Nevers gave to his duties. I should encourage his Majesty in this idea, so that he might become more and more disgusted, and so I should prepare a way by which I might rise to the post occupied by the duc. I must not, he thought, be too hasty about this, because the Cardinal had too much power over his mind for his Majesty to consent to grieve him in this way; but as this prince was growing up, and would not always allow himself to be governed, it was almost inevitable that such a thing should happen sooner or later, and if only a hundred thousand crowns would then be necessary for me to establish myself upon the ruins of the Cardinal's influence he would rather borrow them from his friends, if he had not got them in his coffers, than let me lose such a fine opportunity. Upon this I might rely, and all he would ask in return from me was that I should have recourse to him in everything which might occur. He would never let me want, and I had but to ask him for proofs of this to be assured of at once obtaining them.

His generosity won me over. I felt scruples about ruining such a generous man, and as I was well aware that to repeat his words to the Cardinal would indeed cause his destruction, I concealed the affair so well from him that he had not the least suspicion that I was hiding anything. I told his Eminence that M. Fouquet

had offered to lend me the money wherewith to buy the regiment of Picardie, which was for sale, did I wish to do so, and had pointed out that I should in this way advance my career far more than by continuing in my present post. His Eminence believed this the more easily, as it was a usual enough proceeding on the part of the surintendant. He was wont to place his purse at the disposal of all those in whom he observed good qualities, and as the money, so to speak, cost him nothing, he was constantly squandering it to gain himself friends. I am unaware of his object for acting in this way, but I know that everyone whom he observed to stand well with the King found help from him when he desired to purchase any post. He would even give people pensions out of his own money, so much so that he had just as many pensioners as had the State itself.

The Cardinal having been so credulous as to believe what I had told him, made reply that if this was the important matter which the surintendant had wanted to discuss with me, he was clearly proving that his bent lay much more in speaking of finance than of military affairs. He would wish him to know that my present post was worth more than the regiment of Picardie and all the other regiments with the exception of the Guards. I let him have his say, because the more excited I observed him to become, the better I knew I had played my game. Meanwhile, I had not replied to the obliging offers of the Surintendant by reason of my not having had the time to do so, for the Duc de Mercoeur had made his appearance just as I was about to frankly tell M. Fouquet that I was sorry not to be in a position to accept his very kind offers.

My intention indeed had been to speak to him in a way which would lead to his continuing to hold me in esteem in spite of my declaration that I could never be reckoned as a friend of his. Be this as it may, the arrival of the duc having stopped me, I was now very much puzzled how to reconcile my own inclinations with my duty. For truly I did the Surintendant justice, for he was indeed a man who had a number of good qualities amongst his bad ones. The chief of the latter was his insatiable ambition: nevertheless, he was not of great birth though he thought as much of himself as if he had been a descendant of St. Louis. His wife who was even of lower origin than himself, surpassed him in vanity which rendered her insupportable, and I have once heard her say that she was not astonished at madame the wife of Gaston Duc d'Orléans having retired to Blois, because it was better to be chief of one's village than play a secondary part in Paris! It is even said that she had urged her husband to buy a principality somewhere, and go and end his days there with her. I do not know whether this caused the Surintendant to desire the purchase and fortification of Bellisle, but he certainly concluded the bargain about this time with the Duc de Retz, and inaugurated the works which everyone knows.

My embarrassment how to honourably extricate myself from the difficulty I was in, made me wish that his Eminence would send me away somewhere, so that I should not have to definitely break off relations with M. Fouquet as I now found myself obliged to do. I foresaw that he would speak to me on the first opportunity and overwhelm me with his obliging offers. This he did indeed do the first time we met, and as

there was this time no one to interrupt us, I replied that I was in despair at not being able to become one of his friends as was his wish, but there were such strong reasons against it that I could not overcome them. Otherwise, I should not fail to satisfy my own personal inclinations, which led me to esteem and honour him as I and every man of discernment should do. I did not think I need say more to a generous man such as I knew him to be to preserve that esteem of which he had been good enough to give me a proof. My frankness should please him more than any concealment, especially considering that, notwithstanding the the need I found myself in of taking sides with a party opposed to him, I could not prevent myself saying that I should esteem him as much as was possible whilst a breath of life remained to me.

There was nothing it appears to me more likely to tone down whatever was displeasing to him in my declaration than the compliment with which I had accompanied it. But great men having the particular characteristic that whoever fails them in one thing does so in all, M. Fouquet, far from receiving my speech as I had expected, answered that he had done me a thousand times more honour than I deserved when he had asked for my friendship, and could very well do without my esteem. At the same time, he turned his back upon me in sight of all the courtiers, for this happened in the King's chamber, and as he did so in a rough way and one which indicated his annoyance, all those who had observed our interview paid attention to it, and believed that I had asked him for something which had drawn the affront I had just received upon me. The scene was reported

to the Cardinal not as it had really occurred, but as people had imagined it and as a mere nothing was wont to upset him, he again eyed me askance.

I could not support such a piece of injustice without complaining about it: so having chosen my time to speak to his Eminence in private, I asked him straight if this was the recompense he had prepared in return for my having done, for love of him, that which I would not have done for my brother. In reply, he said that he was unaware of my having served him in any way which merited his consideration, and on the contrary he well knew that I had done as badly as was possible, notwithstanding his having let me know what would please or displease him. I rejoined that he was not doing me justice, and that as he knew so well what I had done, he should be grateful to me instead of looking at me severely as he was doing. It was of this that I now complained so that he might be pleased to treat me in a different way. His Eminence retorted that, however clever I might think myself, I must not fancy I could take him in; he was too well informed about everything for that. He knew how cordially I had approached the Surintendant, and the reception he had given me. In truth, this was revenge enough for my ingratitude to cause him to be satisfied with my punishment, were it not that when one had felt assured of a person's friendship, and found oneself deceived, a certain amount of resentment must always be felt.

For an Italian as was the Cardinal, this was speaking too mildly of such an offence, did he indeed think that it had really been committed, but as he rather suspected than was sure of it, he was apparently eager to hear my own account of what had occurred, so that

afterwards he might act as good sense dictated. I was malicious enough not to hurry about this, contenting myself with complainingly protesting my innocence. Eventually, having delayed long enough, I asked his Eminence if he had forgotten that he had told me to break off relations with the Surintendant, which was what I had done, and indeed in a way which had so much upset him that he had not even been able to stop showing his resentment in the King's chamber itself! Since, added I, he had such excellent spies everywhere and was informed of everything, he ought to have learnt that it was M. Fouquet who had approached me and not I who had made the first move. He had wanted to once more reiterate the fine promises which he had made me at his house and which I had mentioned, but remembering my own pledges I had frankly answered that I could never be one of his friends, which had brought upon me the affront which had been reported. This should have much rather justified me than have caused suspicion to fall upon my head.

M. le Cardinal no sooner heard me speaking like this than he became quite confused at having wrongfully been angry with me, but as people who are in authority over others soon make their peace with them he was not long in doing so with me. He declared, knowing well how to flatter when he cared to do so, that I must clearly perceive from what had occurred the estimation in which he held me, since with or without cause he was alarmed at everything which might threaten him with the loss of my friendship. After this I could say nothing more except thank him for his kindness instead of continuing to complain.

Meanwhile the King had made his journey to Lyons on the pretext of going to see Mlle. de Savoye who was proposed to him as a wife. Nevertheless, neither the Queen-mother nor the Cardinal seriously thought of such a marriage. His Eminence especially would have preferred the King to marry one of his nieces whom he passionately loved, and who likewise adored him. In spite of this the King who loved glory more than his mistress, no sooner set eyes upon Mlle. de Savoye, than though his heart was engaged elsewhere he thought her charming.

The Spaniards who had their attention fixed upon the doings of our Court became alarmed at this marriage. They had been very depressed since the loss of Dunkirk: in addition to which they had lost a number of other places to us including the town of Ypres. An alliance between our King and the Duc de Savoye would probably have led to the loss of the Duchy of Milan which would have been a grave blow to them. They therefore sent Pimentel to our Court to propose the King's marriage with the Infanta of Spain. The Queen-mother desired this marriage most passionately and the populace no less than she, for it would terminate the war which had lasted for twenty-five years. There were, however, obstacles in the way, and though these were not insurmountable they were not very easy to overcome. The Infanta was heiress apparent of the kingdom of her father, and the Spaniards were afraid of falling under French domination, for the Spaniard and the Frenchman do not get on well together. When the negotiations had been first opened, a formal renunciation by the Infanta had been proposed, which was to include any children who

might be born of her marriage. The King also was to make as formal a renunciation as was possible, and both of these declarations were to be registered in the Parlement. This was as much as it was possible to do: but either because their affairs had not appeared in such a bad state as was now the case, or because these precautions had not seemed stringent enough, the Spaniards had preferred continuing the war to the acceptance of any suspicious offers.

However, as what one refuses to-day one is very often obliged to accept on the morrow by reason of necessity, Pimentel came with the intention of overcoming these difficulties or rather smoothing them away. His arrival at Lyons caused the King to depart without having arranged anything with Mlle. de Savoye, who had been brought there by her mother with great pomp. Apparently the latter was unaware that her daughter was merely being used as a spur to the Spaniards. Be this as it may, the stratagem having succeeded fairly well, the Cardinal who usually had no liking for peace, made every sort of difficulty about granting a truce which the Spaniards were asking for, so as not to lose the rest of Flanders, which was in great danger. With great trouble the Queen-mother eventually obtained his consent, for his Eminence with reason enough alleged that all the results of the campaign would be thrown away were the Spaniards on any pretext to break off the negotiations. The money for the armies had already been expended, and as new winter quarters would be wanted, as is usual at the end of the year, if the Spaniards should happen to break faith the kingdom would find itself denuded of money without having gained anything at all.

These were strange words for the Cardinal to utter seeing that he had been ruining France for so many years without the slightest scruple; but as his statement was not to be controverted the Queen had to speak out bluntly before he would yield to her wishes. The truce was then agreed upon, though not signed as yet. Meanwhile, as it was quite assured, it was determined to give Pimental, who had come to Paris incognito, a feast which might show him the splendour of France as in a picture. The house at Berni, which belonged to M. de Lyonne, was chosen for this purpose. M. de Lyonne had been pitted against Pimentel, to arrange not only the conditions of the marriage but further all the differences in dispute between the two Crowns.

This was a regular Gascon's trick. In order the better to overwhelm this foreigner, M. de Lyonne begged Pimentel, as if on the spur of the moment, to come and see his house, which was but two leagues from Paris and there, as if impromptu, the most superb collation ever heard spoken of for a long time past, was served as the work of his own cook. Nevertheless, it was at the King's cost, who even went there to honour this feast in person. But as there was a good deal less respect shown his Majesty at that time than there has been since (the lack, indeed, of which is a crime) his courtiers pillaged a part of the collation before it was set before him. Pimentel, who had already admired the delicacy and prodigality with which the King was every day served, found new causes for admiration in what he now saw. This seemed the more extraordinary to him by reason of its being quite opposed to the frugality which prevails not only at all

the tables of the Spanish grandees but even at that of his Catholic Majesty himself. He sat with Messieurs De Lyonne, Le Tellier, Servient, and some other subordinate ministers, but took good care to show no surprise at what he saw, so that it might be thought that he was accustomed to the same kind of thing or something even more splendid in his own country. Nevertheless, the Infanta showed more frankness when she arrived, and thinking the supper prepared for her out of the common and that it would soon be prepared on a more moderate scale, she begged M. de Villacerf, who was her chief maître d'hôtel, to have the remains of a certain dish, which she had found so good as to eat more than half of, kept. To this Villacerf replied that she was now in such a comfortable household that such a proceeding was unnecessary. She might have whatever she liked, and as much would be served her at every meal as had been that day, and this would continue till she tired of it.

The whole of France was delighted at the thought of the coming peace, and all obstacles to it were thought to have been surmounted now that the question of the renunciation of rights had been settled. Besides this, the Queen of Spain about this time became pregnant, and gave birth to a son, which was a further guarantee that the hopes of peace would not be shattered.

Meanwhile, whilst everyone was rejoicing in this way, news came of a furious debauch[1] which some people of

1 This orgy took place on Good Friday in the year 1659. Amongst other blasphemous ceremonies a young pig is said to have been baptised, and figured in a burlesque of the Sacrament. This debauch was satanistic in spirit, and terminated by an orgy

the Court had taken part in, a circumstance which much grieved the Queen-mother and even the King, who young as he was, was an enemy of everything opposed to good morals. The two Sacraments which are most revered in our religion, that is to say, Baptism and the Eucharist had been desecrated. Horrible things are said about this—things which are only fit to be silently passed over, and even to be entirely forgotten. Indeed, one cannot think of such a thing without horror and the best course is never to speak of the matter.

The Duc de Nevers was there, the Abbé le Camus (the King's almoner, to-day Bishop of Grenoble), the Comte de Guiche, Manicamp, Cavois, elder brother of the one who is now grand Maréchal de Logis of the King's household, and Rabutin. This scene took place at Roissi, the house of the Comte de Vivonne, son of the Duc de Mortemart, who had the reversion of the post of "premier gentilhomme de la chambre." He himself was at the debauch, and all present were of about the same age except Bussi Rabutin, who was at least twenty years older than the rest. This should have made him wiser, since twenty years, weighing on the head of what is called youth, is a marvellous remedy for correcting many faults, but, as Bussi

of an indescribable kind. The Marquise de la Baume was reputed to be the lady who made public the account of the debauch which Bussi Rabutin had written. Satanism was widely spread among the nobles and ladies of the Court of Louis XIV., and although there is no evidence of that monarch himself having taken any part in its horrible rites, Madame de Montespan is reputed to have been an ardent devotee—indeed, there is a tradition which may or may not be based upon a solid foundation that she once assisted at a satanistic celebration in which the chief feature was the murder of an infant.

Rabutin was a man of insupportable vanity (which is much less pardonable in a man of rank than in other people), and especially prided himself on writing better than anyone else, instead of concealing what hè had done he himself took pleasure in divulging it in a pamphlet. He composed an account of this orgy, and having given it to a lady, she, although perhaps not scandalised at the terrible crimes which had been committed against God, was so much offended at the contempt which had been shown for the fair sex by the preference which had been displayed for things which are not allowed to be mentioned nor even thought of that she had copies of the story made, so that these iniquities might not remain unpunished.

She then proceeded to spread them broadcast throughout the Court and all over Paris, at the same time mentioning the name of the man from whom she had obtained the original version, so that more faith might be placed in her statements. The Queen and the Cardinal soon obtained copies, and gained knowledge of things which made them shiver with horror.

The King was scandalised as well as God, and as such a crime is usually punished much more severely and much more promptly than that which has to do with Heaven, though the one is yet quite a different thing from the other, the guilty personages were sent into exile. This was a very small punishment in comparison to what they deserved for all they had done, but as the nephew of the minister was one of them, and the others could not have been punished more severely without his coming in for his share, the culprits escaped under his wing. There was no one who did not think that they had got off too cheaply. People would have

liked some example to have been made, and especially of Bussi Rabutin who was considered more guilty than the others by all.

His age indeed further aggravated his offence, for he was forty years old—an age when one should be discreet if one is ever to be so! Besides, as swaggering people are never popular, his self-exposure by reason of his vanity was not to be forgiven. Meanwhile, the Duc de Nevers, who was the cause of the leniency shown to the offenders, was also the cause of their punishment being curtailed. At the end of the year they were recalled, if indeed one ought not to say that they received their pardon much sooner than that, since, instead of remaining in the place which was prescribed to them in their sentence, most of them came to Paris after a few months without making any mystery about showing themselves to all their friends and even in public. Had the duc not been one of their number, without doubt some person would have been charitable enough to have informed the Queen-mother and her minister of this. I do not say the King, for his Majesty as yet concerned himself about nothing and let the Cardinal do everything.

Nevertheless, there was no one who did not already recognise in his Majesty an extraordinary talent for governing. He was wise and prudent beyond what his age seemed to allow—so much so that all were the more surprised at it because they knew that he had not been brought up too well. The Queen clearly perceived this, especially since he was about to marry her niece which was the one thing in the world which she had always most passionately desired.

About this time the Cardinal began to feel himself failing which made him waive many obstacles to peace which he might otherwise have raised; for well knowing that he was still extremely unpopular, he was anxious when dying to leave it to be said, that if he had done much harm during his lifetime, he had at least at his death performed the good of bringing back peace to all Europe. Indeed, as all the neighbouring powers only follow the two Crowns (France and Spain), they were quite ready to pursue any course they might lay down.

England alone was in great straits, for she no longer had Cromwell to watch over her interests. He had just[1] died rather suddenly, and indeed, in a manner which might have given rise to the idea that his end had been hastened, had it not been that all his life long he had complained of a colic which apparently killed him. Nevertheless, the truth is that he was poisoned, a fact which his widow and children concealed as long as they could, so as not to give the English time to reflect that such is the end of tyrants such as he, and that they would therefore be wrong to put them in his place.

Meanwhile, Pimentel and De Lyonne had agreed on the principal clauses of the treaty, both the first Ministers of the Crowns taking the credit, as if they were the authors of this great blessing. They met on the Ile des Faisans which divides the two kingdoms,

1 Cromwell died on the 3rd September, 1658, aged fifty-nine years. At this time, when any great personage died, he was always declared to have been poisoned, consequently little credence can be attached to the statement made by D'Artagnan that the Protector's end was hastened.

going there with a pomp never before seen, and everyone who had any interest or wished to be included in this treaty sent ambassadors.

The King of England, Charles II., wished also to be present in order to ask for help against his people who continued rebellious. For most of them having wanted to make themselves into a free Republic after the death of Cromwell, they had eventually chosen Richard his elder son as his successor. This had caused the Cardinal to resume his former schemes, that is to say, to oblige Richard to marry one of his nieces by reason of the need he would have of assistance to maintain his position against the factions which opposed him. Accordingly, he had his Britannic Majesty told not to attend the conference, and the King of England then had recourse to the Spaniards to extricate him from the predicament in which this unjust manner of proceeding on the part of the Cardinal had placed him. However, as they could do nothing for him without the consent of France, which, while the minister was of this mind, would never be granted, all they could do for him was to give him the assurance of their goodwill without tangible proofs of it. This prince then withdrew to Brussels, as if despairing of ever ascending the throne, since he could not take advantage of such a favourable opportunity. He had always reckoned on doing so, as anyone else would have done in his place, especially as he knew how much these two powers, as well as all the other crowned heads, were interested in not allowing the people to commit the crime of killing their King without attempting to punish them.

However, to return to our subject, the peace conferences having terminated favourably to the interests

of both France and of Spain, there now only remained those of M. le Prince to be adjusted, about which Pimentel and De Lyonne had not been able to agree. The two Prime Ministers were also much embarrassed about them, for whilst M. le Cardinal insisted that the Prince de Condé should never return to France from fear that he would call him severely to account for the past, the Spaniards, on the other hand, had entered into a formal compact with M. le Prince to conclude no treaty which was not to his advantage as well as their own. Accordingly, as they would sign nothing unless he was given back all his property and reinstated in all the offices and honours which he had held before his revolt, they were ready to break off anything rather than be untrue to their word. What troubled the Cardinal (besides his fear of M. le Prince) was that he had already disposed of part of his property, having given the Duchy of Albret to the Duc de Bouillon and thus alienated it from the house of Condé. Be this as it may, this difficulty being one likely to upset everything, the Spaniards decided to tell his Eminence that they would willingly consent to all his wishes if he would abate them in other directions, and M. le Cardinal, moved by fear of M. le Prince, eventually sacrificed the interests of the State to his own safety, and yielded up to them three or four fortresses on condition that the matter should be allowed to drop.

M. le Prince heard of these negotiations, and complained to Don Juan and to the Comte de Monterei, son of Don Luis de Haro, who in his capacity of Prime Minister of his Catholic Majesty held a like position to the Cardinal at the peace conferences. Neither of these two Spaniards knew what answer to give him, for it

was a very difficult thing to find a good excuse to justify the breaking of solemn promises, ratified by a treaty signed by the King of Spain. The Comte de Monterei wrote to his father, who replied that he should reassure the Prince de Condé by the statement that his Catholic Majesty would never abandon him, and he should trust in his word. M. le Prince, however, did not know how to reconcile these protestations with the contents of the treaty which were already public property. Nevertheless, as he knew that a man like Don Luis de Haro would not deceive him, much less make use of his son to do so, he resolved to wait patiently till time should have cleared up this mystery.

The news of this slightly reassured the friends and parasites (who were extremely numerous) of the Prince de Condé, but letters from Paris continuing to affirm that their master was hopelessly lost, they were completely dumbfounded when the prince was suddenly informed that matters had taken a different turn for the last day or two at the conference. Don Luis de Haro had, it appeared, declared to the Cardinal that if the King his master had agreed that the prince should not regain all his property, offices and honours, so that peace might be insured, he yet intended to prove his gratitude to one who had served him so well by establishing a little principality for him in Flanders, formed out of the places given back by his Eminence. This was the least he could do considering what he owed him; besides which it was only just that he should be recompensed for the loss he was sustaining by reason of the King not keeping his word.

The Cardinal was very surprised when he heard this, and clearly perceived that Don Luis de Haro was

cleverer than himself. Nevertheless, as this arrangement, far from ending the war, would make it last for ever, since a sovereign like the Prince de Condé at the gates of Paris would do as much harm as the Ducs de Bourgogne had in their time caused, he was the first to desire to undo his own handiwork. Accordingly, he requested the Spaniards to cancel the restitution of the fortresses he had returned to them, and bound himself by way of return to induce his master the King to re-establish M. le Prince in his former position. Don Luis de Haro, however, rejoined that what was done was done, and that the King of Spain could make no further alterations. This reply, which showed his Eminence that he had been taken for the greatest simpleton possible, nearly drove him to despair, for now he had to beg for that which before he had refused with very advantageous conditions added. At present he could no longer obtain them, and all he could do was to arrange matters so that, instead of its costing him four fortresses to prevent the return of M. le Prince to France, he only gave two to ensure his return.

This important matter having been thus settled, the King, who had set out from Paris, quelled a revolt which had occurred in Provence on his way to the frontier. In the meantime he sent the Maréchal de Grammont to Madrid to ask for the hand of the Infanta which was a ceremony rendered necessary by the treaty which guaranteed the marriage. The maréchal received all the honours which the ambassador of a great king should on his way to the capital, and even more when he reached it, being accorded audiences of his Catholic Majesty and the Infanta, to whom he presented a letter from the King.

Cardinal Mazarin, who had always flattered himself that his Majesty King Louis XIV would be weak enough to marry that particular niece of his, for whom he had shown some fondness, no sooner saw matters proceeding contrary to his wishes than, in order to make his Majesty declare his intentions, he began to speak of marrying her off. She did not indeed lack suitors possessing as she did great riches. The King did not receive this news as his Eminence had expected him to do, for if he loved her his love was not sufficiently great to make him commit such a great folly. Be this as it may, his mistress,[1] heartbroken at his silence, which she had not expected after the great affection his Majesty had shown her, thought herself entitled to reproach him for it. The King, however, who was very polite to everyone and especially to ladies, replied that far from this being a matter for complaint she ought to be extremely pleased at his behaviour. There were, he added, certain things which were much better not spoken about, and this being without doubt one of them, he had thought to spare both her feelings and his own. They were not made for one another, so regrets could only double their sorrows. Marie Mancini then enquired why they were not made for one another, since he could do as he liked, to which the King replied that that was indeed true, but as he had to answer for his conduct not only to his people, but to the whole of Europe as well, he was obliged to prefer honour to his own pleasure. She then pointed out that Henry

1 Marie Mancini was then nineteen years old. The King had already been on very good terms with a sister of hers, Olympe Mancini, afterwards Comtesse de Soissons and Princesse de Carignan.

IV., who had been one of the greatest kings who ever ruled France, had not scrupled to marry Marie de Medicis, who came of a family no better than her own. In Muscovy the grand dukes were in the habit of marrying their own subjects only, whilst Henry III., King of England, had done just the same, so there were plenty of precedents for a marriage of the kind which she desired.

The King who was wise wished to find means of consoling her and himself also. Indeed, all this was a hard struggle for him, for his own inclinations were opposed to his judgment. Feeling, therefore, uncertain of himself, his Majesty wished to beat a retreat, but Marie de Mancini seized him by the sword-belt, and demanded of him the meaning of the many vows he had made to her. The King rejoined that at least he had never sworn to marry her, but only to love her all his life, and as he had never said he should not do so, she must not judge him harshly till such time as proofs of his bad faith should appear.

She was of such a violent character, besides being carried away by anger, that she asked his Majesty what he could mean by daring to propose an illicit connection to her? She spoke, indeed, just as if she had been a vestal virgin, but seeing finally that nothing was of any use she thought it best to tell him that he was in error if he imagined that, once married, their relations could continue as before, for there were foreigners as well as nobles of the Court who desired her, and she would beg her uncle to give the former the preference, not indeed on account of any personal liking of her own, but in order to avoid having before her eyes the sight of one who would give her more pain

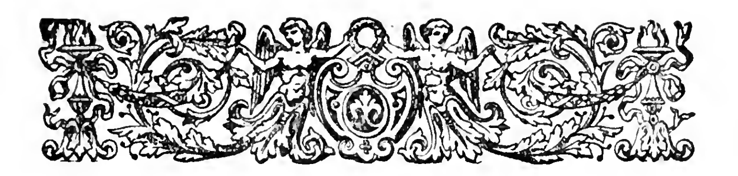
than death itself. Notwithstanding the caution of his Majesty, who besought her to think twice over what she was doing, she went that very minute to her uncle and begged him to marry her to the Connétable de Colonne, who was one of her suitors. The Cardinal, who respected his wealth, which accorded with his great birth, was well pleased at his niece's resolve at the present juncture, and deeming that she could not do better, he arranged the matter with an agent of the connétable in Paris, and told her, two days later, to prepare for a voyage into Italy.

This came like a thunderbolt upon the lady, for pique had made her act as she had done, and she well knew that an exile to Italy was like being buried alive for her whole life. She therefore threw herself on her knees and begged the Cardinal to break off the negotiations, but the latter pointed out that the contract for her marriage had already been signed and expressed his astonishment at her changing her mind so quickly. Such an answer seemed conclusive, but as his Eminence was extremely weak with all his family, his niece did not consider herself beaten as yet, and soon returned to the charge. She declared that if he did not listen to her entreaties she would become the most miserable person in the world: true, indeed, it was that she herself had suggested this match, but she had been in despair at the way the King had treated her, and had been in some measure dazzled by the splendour of the family of the Colonnes. Since then, however, she had learnt that the connétable was eccentric, bad tempered, and so given to jealousy as to have already committed a thousand follies through it, so that she could clearly foresee her fate with him, were

his Eminence to persist in carrying through this marriage.[1]

The Cardinal was touched at her distress, but after having pondered thoroughly over the matter replied, that there could be no trifling with a man of such rank as the connétable, unless the King himself were to take action which might cover the breaking of the pledge which had been given. His niece deemed this remedy almost worse than the disease, especially as he wished her to personally speak to his Majesty, thinking that on account of her former friendship she would be the most likely to succeed. In no case would he himself approach the King on the subject. She consequently did as her uncle suggested, but obtained little satisfaction thereby; for his Majesty thinking she would be best out of the way, declared that she must pay the penalty of her haste, and of having acted without due reflection: besides, he did not wish to have it said that whilst taking a wife he had an idea of keeping a mistress, and she herself should be of the same mind. The lady complained bitterly of the King's harshness, and they separated on bad terms. Some days later she left for Italy, without further showing her regret at abandoning such a splendid Court. His Majesty manifested no sorrow at her departure, on the contrary, he was secretly delighted, for she was beginning to displease him as much as she had formerly delighted him.

1 The marriage did indeed turn out most unfortunately, Marie Mancini eventually fled to France in 1670, where she was very coldly received by the King, who forbade her to come to Court. She died quite forgotten in 1715.



IV

SINCE I was now never away from the King, I found myself at Vaux le Vicomte, through which place his Majesty passed on his way to the conferences. The house in question belonged to M. Fouquet, and he spent so much money on it that had things gone on thus for some time longer he would have created something even finer than Fontainebleau, which was in the vicinity. I there found myself several times in his presence, which pained me after what had taken place between us—and if I am not very much mistaken his feelings were similar to my own. Nevertheless, as he was naturally proud, and even more so than a man of his standing should be, he eyed me with great contempt. This I clearly perceived, but I deemed that I ought not to show my feelings,—not because I happened to be in his house, for I reckoned that as nothing, and I was under no obligation to him, since, rightly speaking, I was rather in the King's house, for he was master wherever he went. M. Fouquet gave his Majesty a worthy reception and a collation more magnificent than had ever before been heard of. The one given at Berni did not come near it by a long way, though it had been given at the King's expense.

The Surintendant was assuredly triumphing in every way, since in addition to having the pleasure of displaying his wealth to a great Court, he further had the gratification of seeing himself praised by all the courtiers. Not one of them abstained from complimenting him, the more so as the Cardinal who might have been jealous was not there.

La Feuillade[1] in particular eclipsed everyone in his flatteries, not that he esteemed M. Fouquet as much as he tried to make out, but because he was such a beggar that he had everyday need of his purse. The Surintendant, who knew that he was in pretty good favour with the King, did not stint him, although not considering him of a character much to be relied upon; he regarded la Feuillade rather as a man whose sallies were likely to make the King laugh than as one fit to make a great impression upon him by his intellect. Be this as it may, this nobleman who had much trouble in getting on, though he was the eldest of his family by reason of the death of two of his brothers who had been killed, and another one entering the church, in which to-day he holds the highest dignities; be this as it may, I repeat, la Feuillade being anxious to retain these means of support, paid such assiduous court to M. Fouquet, that the King became displeased with him. Not that he let him know it! For the Cardinal who already contemplated the ruin of the Surintendant had begged his Majesty to be cautious in everything which concerned him. The reason of this was that his Eminence feared this minister very much indeed, and was very afraid of falling into his hands, for he had many friends in the

1 François Duc de la Feuillade, born 1625, died 1691.

Parlement and the Cardinal had not forgotten the trouble which that body had formerly caused him.

The help of the Surintendant had come just at the right time to La Feuillade, who was a great spendthrift. He owed I do not know how much to a bath-keeper named Prudhomme with whom he lodged. Some time later, indeed, he married this man's daughter, so that he might continue to be assisted, but eventually Prudhomme having become tired out, because he was being ruined, the two men often came to blows, the one because he would lend no money and the other to make him do so by force. This bath-keeper, who was an honest enough man, also had other good customers in his house. The Chevalier de Grammont, brother of the maréchal of that name, was one of these. He was just as hard up as La Feuillade, which used to make Prudhomme say, when told that he looked well for a man of his age, "that it did not astonish him because he had always had two leeches in his house, who drained all the bad blood out of him."

M. Fouquet who thought to pay his court to the King by the superb reception he had given him, got quite a different reward from the one he expected. His Majesty, instead of appreciating it, inferred that all the Cardinal had told him was true and that the Surintendant was a great thief. Indeed, the money expended in this reception was far beyond anything a private individual could afford, and great rashness had been shown, for the whole Court knew that M. Fouquet had not been born rich, and at present both himself and his brothers were all very prosperous and occupied great posts. It was not the Surintendant who had established the fortunes of the family on such a firm

basis, but a brother of his who was now an abbé—a man of inordinate ambition much given to intrigue. It was he, indeed, who had made his brother Surintendant, after he had endeavoured to marry him for a second time to Mademoiselle de Castille who was a great match. The abbé might have obtained the post, but he loved doing what he liked so much that fear of constraint made him prefer that his brother should occupy it rather than he himself should be burdened with its duties, reckoning that everything would be done as he directed. The Surintendant, however, was just as greedy, and once installed would have no master or partner other than he could help, though he had of course to tolerate M. Servient, who indeed performed the most honourable and useful part of the functions attaching to the office.

The abbé was much upset at what he termed the ingratitude of his brother, and soon forgetting the claims of relationship, which should have been sacred, informed the Cardinal of a number of little shifty tricks which he said his brother had made use of to divert into his own coffers what should have belonged to the King. This was carrying his vengeance very far. The Cardinal was very glad to obtain such information. He foresaw the hour coming when the King, taking matters into his own hands, should discover the way the finances had been wasted and was afraid, I repeat, that he should have sooner or later to suffer for it: he was, therefore, very eager to shield himself against the results of any enquiry his Majesty might make. At last the disagreement between the two brothers reached such a pitch that they began to openly abuse one another, and in spite of the intervention of friends they would agree to no reconciliation.

The marriage[1] of the King having meanwhile taken place with all imaginable pomp, his Majesty came to Vincennes to await the completion of all the preparations for the entry he was to make into Paris. This entry was inconceivably magnificent, and I should have needed the purse of M. Fouquet to sustain all the expense I was put to by it. I had on my horse alone ribbons worth twenty pistoles, and, as I myself was decked out just like the altar of a brotherhood, I had to have recourse to my friends to help me. All the musketeers appeared spotlessly equipped, every brigade being distinguished from the others by a different equipment. Meanwhile, hardly had I set foot to the ground to take some repose after the fatigues of the day, when the King gave me orders with his own lips to go over to England to compliment Charles II.,[2] who had at last reascended the throne. He owed his restoration to the indolence of Richard Cromwell rather than to any affection on the part of his subjects, who had not recalled him of their own free will. Not that he was not the best prince in the world, but as he had left the kingdom very young and his people did not know his good qualities nor his honourable disposition, most of them persisted in the hatred they bore his family as well as in the plan of setting up a republic.

This was a thing which they had always contemplated since the horrible murder of their King. It had even been a fixed intention of theirs before that crime, since those well skilled in English affairs do not question but that that lamentable catastrophe was only the

1 Louis XIV. married Marie Thérèse of Austria on June the 4th, 1660.

2 Charles II. was proclaimed King May the 8th, 1660.

detestable result of this scheme. Be this as it may, Richard having shown from the first day when he had been put in his father's place that he was in no way worthy of such a dignity, his indolence rekindled the desires of those who sighed for the Republic, whilst it at the same time imbued others with the idea of dispossessing him of his office and establishing themselves on his ruins. Those who had had the most influence in his father's lifetime, and had distinguished themselves the most in the wars he had been forced to make to do what he had done, were of this number. As they had had the greatest share in his tyranny, and tasted more of the sweets which absolute rule such as Cromwell's brings, than other people, they would not consent to be deprived of it so soon. Perceiving accordingly that the weakness of Richard every day exposed the kingdom to extraordinary revolts, and that to leave him in office would be really the means of soon relapsing under the domination of the royal family, and reaping the chastisement which their evil actions deserved, each of them tried to obtain, to the prejudice of his neighbour, that which he believed himself to deserve much better than he. Having, however, exhausted all the strength of the State, which consisted only in their union in this way, it chanced that Monk, who was one of these aspirants, despairing of not being able to succeed in his plans on account of their opposition, sent secretly to his Britannic Majesty to offer to join forces with him so as to make him reascend the throne. Charles had already a party in the kingdom, but it did not dare raise its head for fear of being immediately crushed. Having no longer this fear now that Monk had declared for

the King, since he had command of all the troops, who were in arms at the death of Cromwell, they arranged matters so well with Monk, that Charles was re-established soon afterwards.

The Cardinal, who had returned to Vincennes, where he was in bad health, had advised the King to send me to Charles II., because I had been on fairly good terms with that prince when he had been in France. He had already sent to congratulate him upon his restoration, and had at the same time offered him his niece, with twelve millions, as a bride. He had thought to tempt Charles II. by the offer of such a great sum, for he knew that he would find himself in need of money and would not like to ask the Parliament for it so soon. Besides, his Eminence was not afraid that he would make the same excuse as Cromwell had done on the score of a difference of religion. Indeed, this prince had become a Catholic owing to the persuasion of the mother[1] of the Duke of Monmouth, so that a person of that faith should please him as much as anyone else.

On the eve of my departure his Eminence, who had not yet told me of his having made this proposal to his Britannic Majesty, sent for me to Vincennes, as he had a message for me to take to England. Bordeaux was no longer there. Charles II had sent him away in disgrace for having secretly intrigued against his restoration. There is no doubt that this was done by order of his Eminence which cleared him, since he had only to obey, but the English King, judicious as he was, not having wanted to say anything about this to

1 This was Lucy Waters, whom Charles II. had met at the Hague. Hume declares that Charles II. became a Roman Catholic owing to the influence of Lord Bristol and others.

excuse him, and having, on the contrary, complained to the Cardinal, as if Bordeaux had thoroughly displeased him, his Eminence treated him so roughly on his return that he died of grief some days later.

All these matters had never come to my ears, but it being now necessary for me to know them, if his Eminence was desirous of my serving him, he had sent for me in order to tell me something about them. I went according to his orders, and having made me sit down by his bedside, the Cardinal declared that he felt himself dying day by day. He had taken all that the Parlement of Paris had done against him so much to heart, that ever since he had not had, so to speak, one hour's pleasure. Its ingratitude had gone to the very bottom of his heart for, instead of such treatment, he ought much rather to have been praised, were it only as a reward for all the trouble he had taken to save the kingdom which had been tottering. Were I to call to mind the condition of affairs at the death of the late King, I must agree with him about this unparalleled ingratitude. Dom Francisco de Mello, Governor of the Low Countries, was near reaching the gates of Paris when, by reason of his orders, he had been too happy to escape to Brussels, and since that time he had done many things of equal merit, so much so, indeed, that he had made a kingdom, which was on the point of collapse, so strong and flourishing that its enemies had been obliged to come and beg for peace. In return for all this his only reward was, that his health was languishing and entirely undermined by the sorrows and fatigues inseparable from his position. True it was that he had amassed some wealth, but of what use was that if it did not serve to establish his

family? Hortense he loved beyond reason, and at first this had made him think of making her his sole heiress on condition of her future husband taking the name and arms of Mazarin. But after having thought everything well over, he had concluded that, were he to abandon the idea of transmitting his name to future centuries and elevate her to a throne, he would be doing something better for her. His own name indeed would always be well enough known in the world by reason of the things history would relate about him, for all that he had done during such a long and difficult regency could not fail to be taken notice of. Besides, he was having a college built which would make him known to posterity and form an eternal monument of his fame. He meant the *Collège des quatre nations* which he was erecting, and which he was founding at the expense of the blood of France, though nevertheless excluding the French from it, except as poverty-stricken students—they could not touch any of the scholarships which were only for the "quatre nations" which he had chosen!

Be this as it may, after having thus exaggerated his sorrows and services to me and the ingratitude of the Parliament at the same time, his Eminence continued to talk in the manner I have just described, but taking care not to admit that it had been he who had given orders to Bordeaux to act as he had done. He even blamed him to me, declaring that his evil methods of proceeding merely arose from his having formed a friendship with one of those persons who was aspiring to become tyrant. He added that the ambassador would much have liked to serve this individual to the prejudice of his Britannic Majesty. I thought what I

pleased about this, taking care to conceal it from him, for by not doing so I should have been paying my court badly. His Eminence finished all this long story by giving me orders to assure the King of England that he had had no hand whatever in such a detestable scheme. At the same time he instructed me to again bring forward the proposal which had already been made to Charles II. about Hortense and to add eight millions to the twelve which had already been offered him. This was, however, to be done step by step, so as I might make the best bargain I could.

Such were the instructions he gave me. The next day I took post, and having soon reached London, I found things calmer than I had expected, considering what was likely to happen at such a time. Indeed, it seemed to me that the King of England having to offer (as indeed he was doing) a number of victims to the "manes" of his father, this could not be done without drawing down upon him the imprecations of those directly or indirectly concerned, but I was in error; no one at all complained of his proceedings because they could not deny that he was right after what had taken place. Some of the guilty ones indeed had come to deliver themselves into his hands, as if acknowledging that they were unworthy to see the light after their crimes. Fairfax, who had commanded the army of the Parliament at the beginning of the rebellion, and who had been the first to dare draw sword against his King, was one of these. He declared, without Charles II. having any need to accuse him of this, that he was unworthy to live. He did not even wait to be reproached to condemn himself to death, but in thus passing his own sentence discovered means, not of justifying himself

(for this was impossible after what he had done), but at least of escaping the punishment which was his due. The King of England, touched by his repentance which appeared sincere, pardoned him, but only on condition that he would never show himself in his presence again.

Directly I had informed King Charles II. of my arrival, he had me conducted to his presence with the usual ceremonies. I spoke to him only of his Majesty's joy at his happy restoration to the thorne, but finally, having acquitted myself of this duty, I asked for a private audience. The King accorded this with less trouble than would have been the case had he known that I was asking it on behalf of the Cardinal. He disliked his Eminence which it was easy for me to perceive at the first mention of his name, for his Britannic Majesty replied that what prevented him pulling me up short was the fact that the Cardinal was prime minister of a prince for whom he had conceived a great esteem when he had seen him—an esteem he should retain until his last breath. Otherwise he thought no more of the Cardinal than of the least of men. He was a weak-minded man, a cheat and dissembler. This had been made clear to him when his Eminence had let himself be intimidated by the threats of Cromwell and had driven him out of France, where he had sought a refuge after the loss of the battle of Worcester. Nor was he less certain about his dissimulation and rascality than his feebleness, since, at the same time that he was making proposals to give him one of his nieces in marriage and re-establish him upon the throne, he was making similar ones to Cromwell and asking for his eldest son for her whilst guaranteeing to utilise all the forces of France to get him crowned King!

I made reply that I had too much respect for his Majesty to dare tell him he was deceived, though, perhaps such was nevertheless the case, and, after a further defence of the Cardinal, proceeded to vaunt the charms of Hortense Mancini. Twelve millions and one of the most beautiful girls in the world were not things, said I, to be despised. She was well worth an Anne Boleyn whom Henry VIII. his predecessor, had espoused. We were not now speaking of the conné-table de Colonne her sister, whose beauty was not nearly so great nor her disposition so tractable. It was impossible to look at Hortense without loving her, and, in short, she was an angel in mortal guise. I continued to dwell upon the good qualities of the Cardinal's niece and especially on her beauty, for I knew that Charles II. was of an amorous disposition and would be more affected by this than anything else.

The King much to my delight listened attentively to me, and I flattered myself that I had touched his heart by my pleading which, seriously speaking, was more truthful than exaggerated, especially on the score of the lady's beauty. He coldly replied, however, that all I spoke of would be excellent in anyone else but the Cardinal's niece. Indeed, he would much like to see the original of my flattering portrait, were it not that fear of her having some resemblance to her uncle robbed him of all curiosity. I then laughingly enquired if his Majesty was as indifferent to the twelve millions as to the lady, adding as a further bait that this was but a first offer of the Cardinal, and if he were to enter upon negotiations with him three or four more might perhaps be added. Charles II. retorted that he had no doubt of it, but as wrongfully acquired wealth,

added to that justly obtained, never brought anything but curses in its train, he did not wish to risk losing his crown by enriching himself at the cost of those whom Cardinal Mazarin had robbed.

Such an answer showed me that my proposals were all in vain, and would never be listened to. I attributed this to the action of Bordeaux when the King was about to be restored, and not being able to alter the ideas of Charles II. though I did my best to that end, I some days later returned to France, since a longer stay in England would have availed me nothing.

I had to thank the King for one thing however; for when I was taking leave of him, he told me that the Cardinal had made no bad choice when he had selected me as his ambassador. He had chosen excellently, and he himself esteemed me greatly, a proof of which was, that if I were willing to establish myself at the English Court, he would treat me so well, that I should have no regrets for what I had left in France. I thanked his Majesty as sincerely as I could for the favour he was doing me, nevertheless, begging him to excuse me if I did not accept his offers. I told him I was attached to my own King by indissoluble bonds which I was not allowed to break. His Britannic Majesty thought that I meant my post and the oath I had taken when installed in it, so he offered to ask my King personally to release me and grant me leave to enter his service. I rejoined, however, that the bonds I spoke of were my feelings of affection for my own monarch, which would last till death. Charles II. could not blame my conduct, so as he ceased to press me further, I again took post to cross over to France.

The Cardinal awaited me with great impatience, for this was his last hope of elevating his niece to a throne. Nevertheless, he had no grounds for satisfaction. I told him that nothing could be done, and that all his millions had not been able to tempt the English King. He asked me the reason of this, but deeming it best not to inform him exactly of what had occurred, as it would be of no use, I contented myself with telling his Eminence that Charles II. was still angry at Bordeaux's behaviour, which had appeared to be prompted by his order. I added that the pretext which his Majesty had made use of had been his belief that it was to his own interests to marry only by arrangement of his Parliament.

I could not, it seemed to me, soften things down more nor do my duty better than by letting his Eminence know, as I was doing, that the King of England attributed the behaviour of the ambassador to him, and the pretext I spoke of was quite true. Nevertheless, careful as I was to try and prevent the Cardinal from forming schemes of revenge, he, before long, did all he could to injure Charles II. Not only did he attempt to rekindle civil war in his country, but further tried to stir up foreign wars against him. He sent a man to the United Provinces for the express purpose of pointing out to them, that his Britannic Majesty intended to ruin their commerce, and that the best thing they could do was to take time by the forelock. The King of England heard of this and sent to France to learn from our King whether this had been done by his orders. He was indeed ready to accept a disavowal, true or not; for after having wandered for twenty whole years from court to court, this prince only

wished to live in peace. He might indeed have revenged himself easily enough, for the Spaniards still viewed France's splendour with jealous eyes. Be this as it may, Charles II. did not believe that Louis XIV. would allow himself to obtain such a reputation for treachery towards a King like himself, who had suffered such great misfortunes. He was right in holding this opinion but wrong in suspecting that our King knew anything about this matter. Indeed, he was very surprised when the emissary of England spoke to him of it, and at once asked his Eminence what all this meant. The Cardinal declared himself ignorant of any machinations, and replied, that assuredly some intrigues must be on foot to embroil his Majesty with the King of England unknown to himself. Charles's envoy thereupon answered that the King his master had not taken alarm for nothing, for there was an individual at the Hague who was doing all he could to bring his negotiations to a successful issue. The Cardinal denied his participation more energetically than ever, and protested that he had never issued orders for such a thing to be done, which indeed was true, for, according to his usual rascally ways, he had managed matters so that his name had never appeared in the negotiations. Nevertheless, he was afraid of his imposture being discovered, and at once dispatched a courier to order his agent to return immediately. He further instructed him to take every precaution to do this without attracting attention, because he was afraid of his Britannic Majesty setting a trap for him on his way.

This proceeding was extremely well timed. The English King was having the man watched, so that, were his Majesty to disavow him, as he expected, and

abandon him, the person who had set him to work might be discovered either by persausion or force. Accordingly the man at once disguised himself in order to escape and assumed the dress of his valet, giving the latter his own clothes. Before leaving, he told this servant that there were reasons for his behaviour, and all he would advise him to do was not to leave his room before hearing from him. He would write in two days at the latest, and, should he not then do so, he was to look for him at Brussels at "the sign of the Wolf," where he would at once join him and have his things brought. Having then left him some money for this purpose, the agent went away *incognito*. Not that this was the road he was about to take! On the contrary, he went straight to Amsterdam, where, having found a merchant vessel which was about to weigh anchor to go to Normandy, he took ship just like an ordinary passenger. His friends, indeed, pointed him out as an insignificant person, because his servant was a smart one. The wind proved favourable, and he landed at Rouen in less than no time, so to speak, so that the spies of the English King were still on the watch for him whilst he was taking post to Paris.

Meanwhile, the valet, having carried out his master's orders with all exactitude, left his lodging at the end of the prescribed time. He did not start until night, as he had been ordered, and having taken the Rotterdam boat, he reached that city two or three hours after having left the Hague, and resumed his journey the next day for Antwerp. A spy of the King of England, who knew the man he had been ordered to watch much better by his clothes than his face, taking this valet for his master when he left his house, got on board the boat

for Rotterdam with him and followed him to Antwerp. He further accompanied him to Brussels, and having observed that he was about to put up at "the sign of the Wolf," called upon the English Resident at that Court, and told him that he had just been following a man who it was of the very greatest consequence should be arrested in the interest of the King his master. At the same time he showed the president his orders from the English minister at the Hague. The Resident, losing no time, at once went off to beg the ministers of his Catholic Majesty to give him permission to make the arrest. As they were very glad to oblige him, and as the governor of the Low Countries was absent from the city, they granted his request on their own responsibility. The president at once sent the official known as a "mayeur" in that country to the hostelry, and this "mayeur" having gone up to the man's room with his archers found him at table and took him prisoner.

The first thing done was to interrogate him as to his name and standing, as well as whence he had come and with what intention. The man replied truthfully to all these questions "that so and so was his name and he was the valet of Mr. so and so; that he had come from the Hague, where he had gone with his master." However, his questioner, thinking he was deceiving him, having replied that all these subterfuges were useless and that he would be doing much better to tell the truth than try and save himself by quibbling as he was doing, interrogated him all over again about a number of other things with exactly the same result. He even told of the exchange of dress which his master had made him make, and of his orders not to go out for two days, and finally of his

instructions to go and await him at Brussels at the hostelry where he now was, in the event of his not getting any news. The English Resident, to whom these depositions were reported, at once wrote to the ambassador of the King, his master, to tell him that he very much feared that his spy had taken the valet for the master. The ambassador at once sent for the landlord of the house where this man had lodged, and enquiring whether it was the master or the servant who had been the last to leave, the landlord confirmed everything which the prisoner had said. He even declared that he had been quite surprised to see him in his master's clothes, so much so, that he had very nearly sent for the Schout[1] to have him arrested as a thief and perhaps as a murderer, but had eventually concluded he could not be either, for had such been the case, he could not have had the effrontery to remain at home two whole days after his master's departure. Accordingly, he did not think he could decently reproach him with such a thing; besides, a further reason for not blaming him was that a brother-in-law of his, who traded with France, having had some merchandise taken to Amsterdam the same day that the master had disappeared, the man in charge had reported that he believed he had seen the master of this valet disguised in his clothes on the same ship by which he had despatched the goods.

More was not needed to convince the ambassador that his spy had been duped, and that the consequences would fall upon himself. He made reply to the Resident that his suspicions were but too true, but that, nevertheless, the prisoner must be watched, till

[1] A police official

he should have received news from England, to which country he was writing. Meanwhile, the man should be questioned as to the name and position of his master and everything about him.

This had already been done without his having to order it, but no one was any the wiser. The man had declared that his master was called Villars, and that he had engaged him eight or ten days before coming to the Hague. He lodged at the Hotel de Moisi in the Rue Dauphine. Not that he was a Parisian, but a thorough Gascon, or from the provinces near Gascony, as his language showed clearly enough. Not to give a better description than this was like setting anyone to find a needle in a bundle of hay! Meanwhile, as the Resident did not know whether all this was cunning or truth, he had the man threatened with torture unless he would reveal more. The poor fellow, who knew no more than he had just said, made answer that he was in his hands, and he might treat him as he liked, but, nevertheless, whether he was tortured or faith placed in his statements, he could not say more than he had done, short of saying what was not true. His frankness of manner, which spoke in his favour, made the Resident unwilling to do anything on his own responsibility. He awaited the orders of the ambassador who had set him to work, and he in turn awaiting instructions from England, fifteen days elapsed before he received them because of contrary winds. Consequently, the real culprit had time to report to M. le Cardinal the result of his negotiations. His Eminence ordered him not to show himself because, in consequence of the way the King of England was taking up the matter, it would be difficult to shield him against

his resentment. He did not need twice telling, but left Paris at once and retired to his own part of the country till this storm should have passed away.

Meanwhile the winds from England became favourable so that the ambassador received an answer from his Britannic Majesty. The reply was to the effect that his Resident at Brussels should send him the prisoner under safe escort. The Resident sent him to Nieuport, to which place the King of England had despatched a yacht expressly to convey the prisoner to that country. This was doing him an honour he could well have dispensed with. I say honour because these sort of vessels are usually sent only for important persons, but Charles II. was so keen about this affair that he would have done far more not to get the worst of it.

We also had a Resident at Brussels, whose name was Launai, if I remember rightly. He was a clever man, and one who intrigued a good deal in order to carry out the duties of his position successfully. Accordingly, getting wind of what was going on, directly this man was arrested, he sent word to M. le Cardinal. His Eminence at once summoned the prisoner's master to learn if his valet knew him sufficiently well to be able to describe exactly who he was. Nevertheless, he did not think him so stupid as to have taken a man with him to Holland who could do him harm, the more so as he had been told more than a fortnight before his departure to take good care to keep his voyage secret. This man had already left Paris when M. le Cardinal sent for him, so his Eminence became very uneasy as to what would be the result of all this. Meanwhile, he sent a courier to Flanders to order the governor of our fortress nearest

to Brussels to send twelve or fifteen picked men there, so that when the prisoner should be taken away anywhere, he might be rescued from the hands of his escort. At the same time, two shipmasters were bribed to hold themselves quite ready on the coast to receive these men when they wanted to escape. All this was done very secretly and before the prisoner had left Brussels to be taken to Nieuport, so that these fifteen men having arrived in the first of these two towns, and having dispersed themselves in different wineshops, as if strangers to one another, they all assembled the moment they learnt that orders had come from England to convey the man, who was the cause of their journey, to the other town. They carried out their instructions very well. They stopped the people escorting the prisoner as they were passing near a wood, and these latter, perceiving themselves to be the weaker party, abandoned their captive, thinking they would be asked for nothing further. They were not wrong, those who had stopped them, having perceived a man who was bound left in their hands, thought only of unbinding and running off with him immediately they had discovered that he was the individual for whom they were seeking. They made no big mistake in doing so, for the escort of the prisoner having fled to Nieuport, which was not very far away, they had no sooner described what had occurred, than the governor not only despatched several parties to arrest their assailants, but further had the alarm sounded, so that all the villages throughout his governorship might take up arms.

Luckily for the fugitives, they had a start of an hour, or an hour and a half, of which they availed themselves

to their own salvation. Meanwhile, as they knew that one of the two ships was in a bay close by, they reached it before the villagers had assembled, and before they were cut off by the armed parties. Nightfall, which soon came on, further favoured them, so that the ship straightway putting to sea, they reached Calais before day had broken. They would not stop there, from fear that there might be some English in the port who might bear witness against them when the affair should have become bruited about. Having accordingly resolved to make for Boulogne, which was very easy to reach on account of the favourable wind, they arrived there in less than no time. The governor and the Lieutenant de Roi were absent, and the major alone was left, who, either wishing to play the man of importance, or being a coward and fearful of being taken by assault, had the men arrested at the gate without letting them enter before they had declared their names and who they were. This was an easy enough thing for them to do, for one and all were officers of repute. However, the major further desiring to know all the ins and outs of their arrival, before allowing them to enter the town, one of them became so annoyed that he sent to tell the major to come himself and find out who he and his companions were.

Such a bold answer was the more displeasing to this officer, because he was not used to be every day in command, and entertained the idea that, when this was the case, he should be paid the same respect as is due, let us say, to his Majesty. Consequently, instead of coming as he had been asked to do, he had all the party arrested by the guard. The officer, who had already insulted him, still continued in the same strain, and

told the major's messenger that his superior would re-release his captives sooner than he liked, and it would not be long before he repented of his stupidity. This threat frightened the major, who was afraid of its proving true, so hesitating between fear of future misfortune and vanity, which urged him to make use of the power given him by the absence of his superiors, he remained undecided until the next day. Meanwhile, a rumour spread through the whole town that the captives were creatures of Cromwell fleeing from London, and an Englishman who had been delayed at Boulogne by sickness, hearing the report, took it to be true and sent word to England by the first mail.

It was at once reported that sixteen of Cromwell's friends had been arrested at Boulogne, and, as a great number had fled and the King of England had them hotly pursued so as to put them to death, he at once sent a courier to his Majesty to entreat that these men should be delivered into his hands. Hardly, however, had this courier left than his Britannic Majesty heard a very different piece of news; letters arriving from Brussels to the effect that the man he was having taken to Nieuport had been rescued. The King's joy at the first piece of news tempered the grief which the second would have caused him, had it arrived alone. He was consoled for the escape of the man by the hope of soon taking revenge on the principal murderers of the King his father, for indeed, as there is nothing more foolish or extravagant than the rumours of towns, these sixteen persons were already announced by their names and surnames, just as if they had all been examined.

Meantime, the major had not come to any decision,

and could not make up his mind at all, when he was told that Milord Montaigu, who had just arrived at the port in a ship, wanted to speak to him on behalf of the King of England. His Britannic Majesty had indeed sent this nobleman, whilst awaiting the return of his courier, to learn who the prisoners were, and if they were really what report declared them to be. In addition, he wished the prisoners to be closely guarded and not allowed to escape. The major made the Milord enter the town, and when he had heard what he had to say, replied that he was sorry he should have come so far for no purpose. Those whom he had caused to be arrested were neither English, Scotch, nor Irish, and consequently the King his master had no concern whatever with them. Milord Montaigu thought that he said this only because he had been bribed, or because the Cardinal desired to save the wretches, so thinking it best to let the King his master know what the major had said, he sent his valet back to England with a letter for one of his nephews, who was to speak to Charles II.

In the interval, the major, who from reports furnished to him had taken the prisoners for Frenchmen, being fearful of having been deceived, went in person to learn who they were. He recognised two or three of them whom he had seen in the service before he had obtained his majority, and concluding by this that he had been wrong to be in such a hurry and that the King of England had likewise done none too well to be so credulous, he repeated to Montaigu what he had already said, whilst he made his excuses to these officers for having treated them as he had done.

Meanwhile, the man who had been sent to the French Court by his Britannic Majesty obtained from the King not only the finest speeches possible, but further a "lettre de cachet" ordering the major to deliver the English, whom he might have arrested, into his hands. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to whom he had applied before speaking to his Majesty, nevertheless at once told him that he did not know who could have given this information to the King his master, for he himself had not even heard a word about it; it was true he might not have been told, because the place where these people were declared to have been arrested was not in his department, but he would, in any case, advise him to speak to M. le Tellier before proceeding further, because if the thing was true he would doubtless have heard talk of it. He concluded by again affirming his incredulity. The King said nearly the same, because he had not said a word to M. le Tellier, who could have cleared up the matter. Before the "lettre de cachet" was issued, his Majesty, however, did speak to this official and M. le Tellier replied that it was true that the Mayor of Boulogne had had sixteen men arrested, who had appeared in a vessel with the intention of entering the town, but he had no information as to whether they were Englishmen. The sole reason he had given for their arrest was their insolent answers, but, if he might give his own opinion, he was persuaded that these sixteen men were fifteen officers and a prisoner whom they had gone to rescue from the Spaniards, who were having him taken to Nieuport to carry him to some place by sea. He would not say any more, though he might have done so, from fear of doing harm to M. le

Cardinal, in whose interest he well knew the fifteen officers had set out. The King was curious to learn who this prisoner might be, and why the Spaniards had treated him in such a way, but M. le Tellier having replied that he knew nothing more, and that M. le Cardinal alone had the secret, his Majesty applied to his Eminence.

It was not difficult for this minister to give him an answer. He made reply that the man was a spy whom he had sent to Brussels, and who had been discovered, so that he would have been utterly lost had he not acted as he had done to save him. The King pursued the subject no further, but concluding that the English envoy had been deceived in believing these sixteen men to be English, he attempted to disabuse him of the idea. This was no easy task. So persuaded was he of the contrary, that he told his Majesty that the King his master would be dissatisfied with him, unless he saw this with his own eyes, and he could not say how far his resentment might carry him, were he once to get into his head the idea that an attempt was being made to evade compliance with his request, for this matter lay very near his heart. Upon this M. le Cardinal intervened and told his Majesty that Charles II. must be satisfied, since his envoy depicted him as being so credulous. He had merely to give him a "lettre de Cachet" so that he might have the prisoners delivered up to him, and send a courier as well, so that were the captives found not to be English, it might not be put in force. The envoy agreed to this, and having left with the courier they soon reached Boulogne.

Whilst all this was going on, the Cardinal was in a

furious passion with the major for having arrested these sixteen people, for it was very likely that when the King of England should see them he would at once conclude that they must be the men who had rescued his prisoner. Accordingly, in order that he should commit no further blunder, he sent off at the same time the best courier there was at Court, so that he might get ahead of the other courier who was accompanying the envoy. This he indeed succeeded in doing, but as one often comes to grief through being too clever, it chanced that the envoy, having seen him pass, became so suspicious that he nearly killed himself in order to overtake him, but failing to do so, arrived at the major's house three hours later. The major showed no agitation when he opened his packet, and contented himself with saying that he had undertaken a very useless journey. It was true that he had sixteen prisoners in his hands, but, to be truthful, not one of them was anything like the man he was looking for. They were all Frenchmen, and he would make them talk if he did not believe it. This was no sooner said than done; he took the envoy to the place where they were and made him speak to them. They had all been well-coached so as to say nothing which might inform him who they really were nor whence they had come when arrested. The major had even had the rescued man put to bed as if ill, so that his clothes, which were much worse than those of the others, might not discover the real state of affairs. The envoy had no sooner spoken to the men than he clearly perceived that they were Frenchmen, but, being suspicious on account of the courier who had distanced him, he went to see the King his master and told him that there was

some trickery in all this, so, if he might be allowed to make a suggestion, he would, if he were in his place, secretly send a man back to Boulogne to investigate this affair and follow it up step by step.

His Britannic Majesty did not think this very necessary, because he believed that the prisoners would be liberated before he could send anyone across the sea. Nevertheless, having pondered well over the matter, he took this advice and sent the Chevalier Temple disguised as a sailor. On his arrival at Boulogne, the latter declared that he had been shipwrecked on the coast of Brittany, and having stopped in the town on the pretext of a slight indisposition, he returned some days later without having been able to discover anything certain. All he knew was that the prisoners had been set free the same day as the King's envoy had left the town, and had all taken the road for Paris. Charles II. said nothing about all this, though he thought none the less on that account. More than ever did he believe that these men were the individuals who had abducted his prisoner, so that hating the Cardinal no less than the Cardinal hated him, since he had despised his offers of a matrimonial alliance, a rupture would infallibly have ensued between the Kingdoms of England and France, had not His Eminence died soon after.

He gave up the ghost at Vincennes, March 9th, 1661, not having survived the peace a year. He was only fifty-nine years old, which was young enough for it to be said that he had not died of old age. Nevertheless, as he had done much harm in his lifetime, he wished to do yet more at his death. He gave the King memoranda concerning M. Fouquet, and against all the men

of business whom he represented as great robbers. I think he was right at bottom, and that they were even bigger rogues than he declared them to be. As they were all nobodies and had amassed immense sums during the King's minority, they might well be condemned straight off without fear of mistake. No other proof indeed of their swindling and thefts was needed than the fine palaces which they had had built at Paris, and in the country. Gold and blue sparkled on all sides, in the garrets as well as the most splendid apartments. The same thing was the case with the furniture. Such magnificence had never yet been seen. In spite of this, people thought the accusation of the Cardinal a strange one, not that it was untrue, but because it came from him. It was not usual to see one thief accuse another except in the hands of Justice, and as his Eminence left more than thirty millions, it was he who should have been indicted rather than others, because there was no robber amongst them all comparable with himself.

He left besides two unmarried nieces. One of them, Hortense, he had before bestowed on the Marquis de Meilleraye on condition of his taking the name and arms of Mazarin. He made her his sole heiress, disinheriting his other nieces to give her a fortune which might make many sovereigns envious. The husband he had chosen was also himself very rich, and besides on very good terms with the King, for he was not[1] what

1 The Marquis de la Meilleraye, who became Duc de Mazarin, was of a very curious nature. He made his wife unhappy by his insane jealousy, for which it must be admitted she gave him some cause. She separated from her husband in 1666 and died in England thirty-three years later. The Duc de Mazarin as he

he is to-day, when one may say that the monks to whom he has given control of his mind have entirely turned his brain. He became jealous of his wife, however, directly he had married her, and, having been obliged to go to Brittany, of which he was the governor, three or four months later, he left her without a penny to bless herself with at Paris, in order to revenge himself for the grief he maintained she was beginning to cause him.

She did not trouble much about this, because she had friends who were not of a kind to leave her in want. One in particular there was who, sending her a bouquet (which she very much liked), every day, accompanied it (without failing once) by a purse containing a hundred louis d'or. This purse however, was merely for her pocket-money, and he took care to furnish what was needed for her household besides. Her husband, who was no sooner four leagues away from Paris than he repented of the state in which he had left her, had written to this individual to furnish what was necessary. He was to repay him these advances, but as to the hundred louis and the bouquet, that was the man's own affair and one indeed for which the husband was not likely to be grateful.

To spend all this money every day one must be a very rich man—either a wealthy prince or at least a financier. Nevertheless, the giver of the bouquets was neither the one nor the other, but merely a man modestly brought up, very far from the rank of prince

grew older developed a liking for mysticism and religion bordering closely upon madness. Amongst other eccentricities he became ridiculously scrupulous about the laws of decency and drew up some ludicrous rules for safeguarding them.

and yet above what is called a contractor, but he had the handling of money, a position he still retains, and it was from that source he drew this sum without its being known. He thoroughly intended, however, to obtain some merchandise for this money, but of a kind which need not cost the duchess much, always supposing that she did not attach great importance to her honour. The man was desperately in love with her, and it was with love that he desired to be repaid. I do not know if he was successful and I very much doubt it. All that I do really know is, that the duc, who had thus made him his steward without wages, soon revoked the commission he had entrusted him with, when he perceived or heard by letter what was going on. He became more jealous of this individual than of anyone else, though his wife had other swains, and he controlled his passion so little that only the blind and deaf failed to discern his weakness. Indeed, not satisfied with showing by deeds that the matter affected his heart, he further manifested it by words, so that the whole thing became as common as bread in a baker's shop.

But to speak no more of his jealousy, which besides would take me too far astray, since from this man it strayed to someone else and from someone else to yet another, and so on to infinity, it must be known that no sooner were the Cardinal's eyes closed than the Duc de Nevers would have taken his departure for Rome, had he dared to do so. Not that he made any particularly great complaints about what his Eminence had done for his sister to his prejudice; if he even mentioned it, it was only for form's sake, and merely to show that he was not unaffected by it. Indeed he was not really upset. So little even was this the case, that there were people

who declared that he looked upon her with no angrier eyes than the man who every day brought her the hundred louis in the purse. But let people think what they like, that is not my opinion, rather do I imagine that the sympathy which existed between them was but the ill-directed fire of youth.

True it is that they indulged in dissipation together to the point of drinking and eating to excess, so that strange things happened, but if these are the sole grounds for condemning them, much rather do I deem that they are enough to entirely clear them. As both brother and sister were in the full flush of youth, a word in each other's ear, the squeeze of a finger tip, a smile, and finally the least wink or smallest gesture, must have been something much more charming than a horrible iniquity, so unnatural as to be more the action of pigs than of reasonable beings. Be this as it may, either from love or callousness, the duc saw these riches, which should have been his, in the hands of another without much sorrow, and behaved much in the same way with regard to his post, which he began to attend to less than ever. Indeed, he would immediately have thrown it up, if the King would have allowed him to make some money out of it, but as his Majesty had got two great ideas into his head at the same time, to wit—the reform of the finances and the establishment of discipline amongst his troops (who did not know what proper behaviour was) he desired as much as he could to suppress the abuse by which these kind of posts had become saleable under the ministry of the Cardinal. Not that they had not been sometimes disposed of in the same way during the reign of the late King, but as such a thing only took

place on rare occasions when his Majesty had wanted to reward some old soldier at no cost to himself, what he had done was nothing to that which had since become a practice.

The King indeed was so bent upon the two reforms I have just mentioned, that he held a council every day about them. This prince, who already had judgment enough to perceive how disadvantageous it had been to him to have a Prime Minister, did not intend to have another, and proposed to do all there was to be done in the State himself. Nevertheless, as he did not yet possess sufficient experience, he every day consulted M. le Tellier, a very clever and judicious man, yet weak to such an extent that he never dared breathe a word whilst the Cardinal was alive, but praised everything that was done. M. le Tellier was quite agreeable to the King being sole master, which was to his advantage and accordingly encouraged him, pushing forward his eldest son Michel François le Tellier as an assistant to his Majesty, in the hope that as he was about the King's age, that monarch would become attached to him. This son was scamp enough, though apparently serious. He loved pleasure above everything else, and in a word was thoroughly debauched—much to his father's displeasure. The King soon perceived his irregularities from several things which he could not account for, though the father attempted to conceal his errors by declaring him to be slow witted. He preferred to pass him off as a German or Fleming, people usually thick headed, rather than as a debauchee, conceiving that the King would be more scandalised by that than by a natural defect. His Majesty allowed himself to be deceived by these stratagems, and really

attributed young Le Tellier's faults to stupidity, whilst recommending his father to be patient with him. Meanwhile he himself tried to form his character, thinking perhaps that any good he might do would redound to his own honour. He sowed seed in no ungrateful soil, for this apprentice[1] minister is to-day one of the first masters in the art of well conducting a kingdom. War especially he so thoroughly understands, without ever having been in it (at least in any fighting), that he knows just as much as a number of generals! Be this as it may, these were the two men with whom the King shut himself up to work at the re-establishment of discipline in his armies, whilst he chose another well worth the two of them together, to look after the finances.

This was Jean Baptiste Colbert,[2] a man devoid of science and learning, but who, like the King, though he had never been made to learn anything, knew a thousand times more than a quantity of others who had passed their youth with the Jesuits or in other schools. He had been the Cardinal's right hand in many things towards the end of his life, especially when there was anything to be taken, for which he showed great aptitude. He had been his secretary until his death, and like him was the enemy of financiers, on whose ruins he wished to rise, and especially of M. Fouquet, because he held a position he hoped one day to fill. For a long time past he had been investigating the disordered state of the finances, and had frequently spoken of it to the Cardinal, who had thoroughly agreed with his conclusions, but, being too much engrossed in accumulating

1 Marquis de Louvois (1641-1699).

2 Born at Rheims (1619-1683).

riches, had delayed the execution of Colbert's plans till after his own death.

This was putting it off to the Day of Judgment, since he would have lived till then, had he been able! But death eventually approaching, which is a time when one looks at things in quite another way to that in which one views them in one's life, his Eminence spoke of this scheme to the King as of something marvellous, and one which he would have taken in hand himself had he longer to live. Mayhap, he thought he was speaking the truth, not feeling at that time the same fondness for wealth which had always been his passion. The King listened with attention and pleasure, his youth not preventing him from recognising that good order in the finances is essential to a King, if he is desirous of doing any good. He remembered the number of enterprises which had failed for lack of money, so, being already very eager to put himself in the hands of Colbert, he told the Cardinal as much, who, although almost at death's door, made him come into the room to have an interview with his Majesty.

Colbert was just the man to create an impression. He never laughed in public, and to see him one would have said he was the enemy of all pleasure. His mind was always occupied with a thousand schemes. Nevertheless, he was just as pleasant as anyone else in conversation when not worried. To see him with people who were friendly or with those unsympathetic to him, was as different as is night from day—an excellent talker for an uneducated man, and able to put the construction he desired upon anything. The King was very fond of hearing him discourse, and

thought him a man of sound sense. His Majesty wanted to see him a second time, but not in the room of his Eminence, because he was getting worse every day, and was believed to be about to die every moment. M. Joli, the curé of St. Nicholas des Champs, a great preacher, whom the Cardinal had sent for to administer the sacraments, would not consent to give him absolution for his sins, till he had promised to make restitution of that which he had taken. This was equivalent to sending Hortense to the workhouse and breaking off her marriage! It was also the very thing to make this poor invalid despair. He had learnt French, with the exception of the word "restituer," which he did not understand. A remedy having to be found for all this, it was decided that he should confess to the King how handy he had been whilst he had managed his affairs, and should entreat him to cry quits in consideration of the information he had given him. There was no great need for this confession to be made, since no one in the kingdom had ever dreamt that his Eminence had looked after his affairs to the prejudice of his own. One had but to remember his poverty on arriving in France, and his present wealth. When he had come to Court he had been too happy to inhabit a garret at the house of M. de Chavigny, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and to eat at the table of his clerks! Nevertheless, as he was wont only to benefit those he feared, no sooner was he all powerful with the Queen-mother than, by way of reward, he had M. de Chavigny dismissed from office and banished from the council. Soon afterwards he had him thrown into prison, and had never ceased to oppose him till he saw him in his grave!

The King knew all this, but having a real respect for the Cardinal, because up to that time he had been surrounded only by his parasites, he no sooner perceived him wailing and crying on acconnt of the curé of St. Nicholas declaring that there was no mercy to be hoped for unless he made restitution, than moved by pity and charity at the spectacle of his grief and prayers, he granted him what he asked. His Eminence therefore, died in a more peaceful frame of mind than he had before been in, though one is not too certain if this was enough for his salvation. Indeed, his attacks on M. Fouquet savoured as much of revenge as of a desire of setting the finances in order, since, when living, he had tried to ruin them, and had been the cause of the present abuses without having in any way tried to repress them.

His hatred arose from two things, the refusal of M. Fouquet when first appointed Surintendant to lend him two millions, because the security was doubtful, and his reported saying " that the nobles of the realm were very foolish to run after the nieces of his Eminence, since, were he to fall into the least disgrace, they would be held of no greater account than the street walkers of the Pont Neuf, whom they much resembled in their great appetites, indeed, he could not understand how these lords were willing to burden themselves with such bad goods." Fouquet, who had heard that his Eminence had had this reported to him, had denied it like murder itself, either truthfully or from policy. The Cardinal had feigned to believe him, but being an Italian and consequently not understanding forgiveness, he had ever since cherished a grudge against the Surintendant. During his lifetime Fouquet had been

warned to be on his guard, but instead of profiting by this advice, he had behaved so badly as to have given his enemies ground for ruining him in his Majesty s estimation. He had had Belle Isle fortified, given the banquet I spoke of a moment ago, and besides this bestowed pensions on all the riff raff, as if he had possessed an inexhaustible spring of gold and silver. In addition to this he committed another serious fault in attempting to make great friends with M. le Prince on his return, and giving him presents. This prince who was in need of money, accepted them the more willingly because he was unaware of the giver being in the King's bad books. On the contrary, he thought him in greater favour than ever, now the Cardinal was dead, since for the future he would have but one master instead of two. For the King had loudly declared before all the Court that he would have no Prime Minister, and would be his own in future. This, for a young prince not yet twenty-three years old, was thought to be a somewhat great undertaking, and several people aspired to fill the Cardinal's place, without considering that their shoulders were too weak for such a burden. M. le Tellier, Fouquet, and De Lionne, were of the number, and tried to cut each other out by all sorts of tricks. Servient would have certainly been a competitor had he been alive, but he had died before the Cardinal, and had gone to kingdom come.

M. le Tellier grounded his hopes upon his character of wheedler in which he excelled all the others. He was as fair spoken as honey. His behaviour never altered, nor his expression either,—as affable at one time as at another, though just as malicious and dangerous as if he had been the most irascible and

choleric man in the world. He cleverly gave his Majesty to understand that he had the secret of the whole kingdom, because the Cardinal, who had had a thousand proofs of his discretion and zeal, had thought fit to have no secret from him. The King listened to all this without saying anything or showing that he saw through his plans. Meanwhile, De Lionne on his side was vaunting his negotiations in foreign countries. He informed his Majesty that a minister was of very little account unless he understood their affairs, and that it was for this alone that Cardinal Mazarin had been chosen amongst many others for the position he had so gloriously held in the state.

What Fouquet in his turn said I do not know, unless it was that the finances were the sinews of war, and that their administrator should be preferred to every-one else, since otherwise nothing could be done. Be this as it may, M. le Prince, who was naturally very clever (and to whom adversity had acted as master and taught him that which before he did not know), concluded from the King's behaviour that none of these aspirants would be elevated to the post of the late Cardinal, and became the more inclined to join with the Surintendant, who had the key of the treasury, which is a fine thing; besides, he was unaware of his being in such evil odour with his Majesty as to be on the eve of ruin. Further, he did not see how he could ever effect a reconciliation with Le Tellier or Lionne, whom he had formerly not only denounced, but also driven from the Court, despite the Queen-mother and her minister.

Accordingly, the Prince de Condé became a staunch ally of M. Fouquet, who cemented the friendship by a

present of fifty thousand crowns which M. le Prince accepted without demur, though considering his present position at Court, where he was in very bad odour, he might have known that this gift was made with no good end in view. Indeed, he had to pocket some insult every day and was treated with no respect at all. Fouquet, who knew of this, gave him the money because he suspected that the prince might stir up some fresh trouble in the kingdom, and, so in case of any attacks being made upon him, might accept his protection, for though M. Fouquet kept up his spirits and even aspired to the ministry, he did not feel very safe, fearing least the Cardinal might have influenced the King against him, and that he would feel the results when lest expecting them. Nor was he wrong. His Majesty who saw Colbert, who was conducted by a small secret staircase to the closet of the Queen-mother, was more bitter than ever against him. M. Colbert did all he could to fan the flame, because he coveted the position of Surintendant and knew he could only obtain it by the downfall of Fouquet. Meanwhile, as the Cardinal had enjoined on his Majesty the necessity of not offending the Parlement till such time as he could lay down the law to that body, the King resolved with Colbert to adroitly oblige Fouquet to give up his post of its Procureur-General, being afraid that the Parlement would become incensed, were it to see one of its principal members arrested; for had it not indeed done this on account of a plain conseiller at the time of the civil war? Be this as it may, Fouquet was told that surely he could not entertain the idea of being Prime Minister and Procureur-General of the Parlement at the same time, offices as incompatible one with

the other as a Frenchman and a Spaniard? He was simple enough to swallow this pill and gave up the office in favour of M. de Harlay, father of the present Procureur-General. He obtained an exorbitant price for it in comparison with what it is worth to-day: for the King, after having demolished the authority of the Parlement, as I will in due course describe, fixed the price of all the offices, including this one which before had no regular price.





V

THE King, advised by Colbert and his own prudence, continued to look favourably on Fouquet who, though he did not obtain the post of Prime Minister which he much desired, was consoled by the hope of being absolute in his present position, now that the Cardinal and Servient were no more. At this time his Majesty had a rumour spread abroad that he was desirous of going to see the coast of Brittany so as to build a safe harbour for ships. Everyone believed it, but all this was merely a pretext to be able to go close to Belle Isle without rousing the suspicions of the Surintendant. It was feared that, should Fouquet become alarmed, he would throw himself into the arms of the English, who much wished to break with his Majesty. The fortress of Dunkirk, which they had kept, and its offensive strength in case of war, made them so conceited that they did not scruple to insult all Frenchmen coming and going in their country. It is true this applied only to the populace, which is more insolent in England than anywhere else, but, as it is also more powerful, the King was obliged to be upon his guard. He was wise to act thus, the more so as the Surintendant, having an idea he might be arrested, had sent over to England to ask for help from his Britannic

Majesty, should he need it. This is almost inconceivable in its impertinence, but is, nevertheless, true, being the result of the air of the Court, which had entirely changed his nature. Indeed, he thought himself almost a Sovereign, and believed that all his pensioners would be on his side, besides M. le Prince and another individual of whom I have already several times spoken—the Marquis de Créqui. He had got round him by marrying him to Mademoisselle de Plessis Bellièvre, whose mother was his staunch ally. After having had an idea of buying an important post for the marquis, he had decided to negotiate for him to be made General of the Galleys, for he was a brave man and as good a commander on sea as on land. Belle Isle could not be attacked without a fleet and with the marquis commanding the naval forces of his Majesty, the Surintendant could arrange to delay its capture.

I am convinced that this was Fouquet's idea alone, and that the Marquis de Créqui was not the man to share his sentiments; for he loved his King and his duty too much to be wanting in either. Be this as it may, we left Fontainebleau towards the end of August for Nantes, where we arrived on the first of September. M. Fouquet had followed the King, but his Majesty delayed the execution of his plans, because the troops marching towards Belle Isle had not yet arrived, and he desired them to be on the spot when the blow was struck. Those not in the secret did not know what to think, and, had his Majesty been older, would doubtless have imagined that he contemplated some raid into the Isle de Rhé, since this was the only likely thing, other than an attack upon the English.

Fouquet had a confidential man at Belle Isle, who had

sworn to be faithful to him against one and all. He was the first to think that the presence of so many soldiers boded no good, and so he secretly sent a courier to his master to warn him to take precautions. This was very sound advice, had the message ever reached him: but, as all coming and going from Belle Isle were closely watched, the courier was arrested when he had gone only two leagues. The man was interrogated, and, being very far from a fool, replied that he came from Belle Isle, knowing that the Court was close by, with the intention of applying for a company which was vacant in his battalion, and as he was very plausible, his captors could now only search him. This they did not fail to do very carefully, and it was only in the heel of one of his boots that they found a very brief note from the governor. It was directed to M. Fouquet, and merely begged him to place reliance on what the bearer should say. The courier was much confused at this discovery, and being asked what his message was, lost his head or underrated the intelligence of his captors, and replied that it was only a petition to the Surintendant, begging him to intercede to obtain the company which was the petitioner's just due, since he had always been exact in carrying out his duties as a soldier. He was told that a note concerning what he spoke of was not concealed in the heel of a boot, for one would take a pride in carrying it in one's hand, nor were letters of credit given for such a purpose. The courier was dumbfounded, and, although threatened with torture unless he made a true confession, refused to do so. The persons who questioned him were not the men to carry out their threats, and applied to the Court for instructions. They were ordered to send him

to Paris under a strict guard, and on his arrival there the man was put into the Grand Châtelet where he still continued to keep silence in face of the lieutenant-criminel. This officer made use of torture, but, as the victim knew he must die, were he foolish enough to speak, he endured all the torments with admirable fortitude, and without saying a single word. He thought that, once they were over, he would go scot free, but nevertheless fared no better than if he had told all he knew, for he was made to suffer so much that he expired in the middle of his tortures.

Whilst this was going on, M. Colbert, who continued to see the King secretly and at night, sent for me very early one morning to beg me to be good enough to come and see him. This was how his message ran: for, as he was not a minister yet and was indeed very far off being one, he did not then behave with such haughtiness as has since been his way when in a position of power. I was surprised at this, for I was unaware that he had come on the journey. He had indeed travelled incognito, only showing himself to the King and to Deniert, who introduced him into his Majesty's room when he had anything to say. He even communicated with the King by letter occasionally, so as not to show himself, from fear of arousing M. Fouquet's suspicions, because, when at Paris, he had discovered his secret interviews with the King. So, knowing that M. Colbert had been one of the chief intimates of the Cardinal, he had taken alarm, and a mere nothing would have made him try and escape.

Nor was he alone in being disturbed by these interviews; Le Tellier had in some measure shared his feelings, for, knowing Colbert's disposition better than

anyone else (having been his chief clerk for some time), he had arrived at the conclusion that something of importance was hatching. Le Tellier even feared that he might be involved, for his department was none too well conducted, though he himself was innocent and the robberies were committed only by his clerks. In consequence he cleverly put in a few words with the intention of setting his Majesty against M. Colbert, but he came rather late to be successful, for M. le Cardinal had given the King too great an opinion of his subordinate for him to be upset by a bitter word. His Majesty, besides, was enthusiastic about his fine scheme for the administration of the finances, and was as eager as the author to see him in office, so that he might become all powerful, which Colbert made him hope he would soon be.

Be this as it may, having gone to see M. Colbert as I had been requested to do, he told me after some compliments (which he could pay as well as anyone else when in the mood), that the King had resolved on an important stroke to mark the beginning of his reign, and had selected me to carry it out. I ought really to be grateful to him for this, because, having remembered that both of us had belonged to the same master, he had named me to his Majesty as a person capable of rendering him this service. He had, besides, thought fit to prefer me to a number of others who could have done just as well, because he had always found me very exact and very faithful.

He was the kind of man who makes a speech before coming to the point, as may be observed, but he made a very bad choice in selecting me for this sort of thing, since I could scarcely answer him, only knowing how to

go straight ahead. However, as I had always heard say that a man should be repaid in his own coin, I returned compliment for compliment, declaring that I was extremely grateful for being honoured with his remembrance, the effects of which I was experiencing, since it was on that account that the King had chosen me from amongst a hundred thousand others of more importance I added that though his Majesty, as was true, might have selected a more worthy man, I dared boast that there was no one who would execute his commands with more zeal or precision. M. Colbert rejoined that these were just the qualities which rendered a man deserving of his prince's esteem, and so, no matter how I might disparage myself, he should always have a proper opinion of my merits: but, as no time must be lost in idle words, he would at once tell me what all this was about. The King commanded me to arrest M. Fouquet, when leaving the council, and then to conduct him to the Château d'Angers and keep him in sight till further orders. I replied that his Majesty did me a great honour in entrusting such a mission to me, but, nevertheless, I should have been more grateful to him had he chosen someone else for it. M. Colbert, who was quick and smart, immediately enquired if I was a pensioner of the Surintendant like many others, since I now excused myself from obeying the King's orders. I retorted (as sharply as he had asked) that I had never been the pensioner of anybody, and would never be anyone's except the King's: though, like himself, I had been a servant of M. le Cardinal's, I had never been a servant with wages. This was what had suited me best in his service and was why I had remained some years in it. Any repugnance, indeed, I

might have to undertake the mission he had mentioned was inspired only by generosity. He might, perhaps, have heard that M. Fouquet had done everything in the world which he could to make me one of his friends and mayhap one of his pensioners. M. le Cardinal might have informed him of this, since he knew of it, and had signified to me his dislike for my having anything to do with the Surintendant. I had not, however, waited for him to speak, because I knew that one could not serve two masters at the same time without being false to one of them, as I had read in a Book which did not lie, as so many others did. If, therefore, I were now to arrest M. Fouquet, it might be thought that I had asked for this mission to revenge myself for certain things he had since done to me, since he had not approved of my declining to be one of his friends. M. Colbert answered that he knew all this, and that it was the very reason he had proposed my name to the King in preference to many others. He might inform me that M. Fouquet was far more guilty than I could imagine, for I might perhaps think his crime was merely some prevarication —there was much more against him which he could not now tell me, but which I should shortly learn, because the King had resolved to punish him as he deserved. He would certainly not, added he, let his Majesty know my answer from fear of its doing me harm. A prince disliked people playing a generous part at the wrong time, especially when it involved his orders not being carried out. One should obey all his commands, the more so when his orders were entirely in accordance with justice.

I had not a word to say in reply to this: so unconsciously getting rid of my scruples, I felt myself strong

enough to answer that I had no doubt indulged in a false delicacy, but, now that he had convinced me by showing me my duty, I was ready to obey his Majesty. He had but to give me my orders, and the thing would be soon done. M. le Tellier rejoined that there were no written orders, and the King himself would give them me by word of mouth. He had, however, been eager to speak to me first, so that I might attend his Majesty's "lever," and I must not lose a minute, for it would soon be his time for rising.

I at once set out, and the King, who was already prudence itself, catching sight of me, questioned me about my company, and issued a great many instructions about it, and further enquired after certain distinguished soldiers. Then, drawing me aside against a window as if about to tell me something which had to do with them, he enquired in a low tone if M. Colbert had spoken to me? I answered in the affirmative, saying I had but just left him—he had told me I was to arrest M. Fouquet, and was to go and receive his Majesty's orders on the subject. The King replied that since this was so, he had no further commands to give me: I must take great care to acquit myself of my mission, and especially not let the Surintendant speak to anyone after I had seized him. He had been told that M. Fouquet had received a warning, but did not know if this was true or not, but, were it really so, he might very likely try to escape to Belle Isle, so I must now watch him for fear that, feigning to come to the council, he should take another road.

It was true that M. Fouquet had been warned to be on his guard. He had spoken of it to Madame du Plessis Bellière who was at Nantes. She told him

that he knew very well who had given him this advice, and must judge of its truth. The Surintendant said that he did not know for certain, as it had come in a letter written in an unknown hand. He had, however, a suspicion, and the supposed writer might know something, a circumstance which greatly troubled him. Madame du Plessis Bellière advised him to put another man in his sedan chair and half draw the blinds, and send it in this manner to the château of Nantes. If his arrest was contemplated, his would be captor would be finely cheated, whereas, if such was not the case, he could follow in a carriage and thus cheaply avoid the danger which threatened. However, the Surintendant did not find this stratagem to his taste, and, having overcome the arguments of the lady, set out for the council as usual. Nevertheless, he was so worried that it was easy to perceive that his conscience was reproaching him. The King let him notice nothing whilst the council lasted, thinking he ought not to insult an unfortunate man, and that it would be time enough to make him render account of his conduct when in the hands of Justice.

The council lasted more than two full hours, during which his Majesty attempted to discover certain things which he could only learn from the Surintendant himself. He was afraid, that once arrested, he would be malicious enough to refuse to speak, or might endeavour to confuse matters. The council having at last finished, M. Fouquet descended from the King's chamber by the great staircase of the château. I awaited him at the bottom with some musketeers. They were ten paces away from me dispersed two and two as if by chance. When he was informed of his misfortune, he was quite alarmed

at seeing me, suspecting, apparently, that I was only there to see what was about to occur. He was surrounded by a crowd of people as are all the ministers, especially those of war and of finance. I did not stir from my place till I saw M. Fouquet on the last step, at the foot of which his chair awaited him. The door was already open and quite ready to receive him, but, having informed him that he must not enter it, and that I arrested him on behalf of the King, the whole crowd of courtiers disappeared in a moment, without a single one of them remaining to console or pity the Surintendant in his disgrace.

Though very surprised, he did not fail to reply that the King was master to do all he liked, but he would have been very grateful had he chosen another than myself to execute his wishes. This was clearly a sign that his enemies had influenced the mind of his Majesty, for they knew that he had no reason to love me, and this was why apparently they had selected me in preference to anyone else, so as to give him pain. I replied that, nevertheless, I was unaware why he disliked me, since I had never done anything to him, except refuse to enter his service to the prejudice of M. le Cardinal, to whom I owed everything. If he called this a cause for hatred I could make no answer, but, as for myself, it seemed to me that I ought rather to be esteemed for it.

I said this as briefly as possible, the time and place not permitting me to be very lengthy. At the same time I made M. Fouquet enter another chair, which I had ready, and, having taken him to the house of an Ecclesiastic of the Cathedral, which was not far off, whilst awaiting a carriage to convey him to the ap-

pointed place, I perceived him so puzzled that I divined that he deemed his affairs to be in sorry plight. The "Grand Prevost de l'Hôtel" at once arrested the clerks who had followed him, whilst all his papers were placed under seal. The carriage which I awaited soon arrived, and having made him enter, I had it surrounded by thirty musketeers, at the head of whom was St. Mars, who is to-day Governor of the Citadel of Pignerol. He was then only "Maréchal de Logis" of the company, but, fortune having favoured him, he finds himself to-day much more advanced than I, though then I was a long way above him. I had the King's orders not to let my prisoner go a step without me: so, personally escorting him to Angers, I put him in a room without recognising the authority of the Lieutenant de Roi, who was in the château. Meanwhile, the Governor of Belle Isle was summoned to surrender. This he would not do, so it was thought that it would be necessary to resort to force in order to bring him to reason. Indeed, he at first jeered at all the threats which were used, as if the fortress had been impregnable, or feeling sure of assistance powerful enough soon to raise the siege which was beginning. Finally, however, having abated his pretensions little by little, he opened negotiations, and soon afterwards surrendered.

All the relatives of M. Fouquet had a share in his disgrace as well as some of his friends. M. de Bethunes, son of the Comte de Charost, Captain of the Garde du Corps, who had married his daughter by his first wife, was exiled with her. The brothers of the prisoner shared his fate, some being sent in one direction, some in another. L'Abbé Fouquet did not escape any more

than the Archbishop of Narbonne, the Bishop of Agde and the Écuyer of the King, though it was he who had impeached his brother. Besides this, as such a part ill became him, he got no pity; on the contrary, all Paris and all France were of opinion that he had only received his deserts. The Écuyer wanted to take his wife with him into exile, but she would not go. As she had only married him for the sake of his brother's fortune, she no sooner saw him brought low than she preferred a convent to his company.

All the relations and friends of her husband did what they could to stop her doing this, pointing out that such a thing, besides being agreeable to neither God nor man, would be a further cause of triumph to the enemies who were already jubilant at their disgrace; she had married into their family and should share good and ill alike. Their remonstrances were vain. Being of a far more illustrious house than the one she had entered (for she was a d'Aumont) she despised her husband so much that she had only refrained from making her mind known from fear of her brother-in-law. But as everything in this world changes and especially woman, who is vicissitude itself, she finally got bored with being shut up within four walls and wanted to return to him. Her husband was ready enough, either from love or pride, but his family having made him ashamed of what he was about to do, he had her informed that, as she had abandoned him in his disgrace, she was a little late now in desiring to share his lot.

I stayed a very short time at Angers with my prisoner, and having received orders from Court to take him to Vincennes, placed him in the Donjon where prisoners of State are put. La Feronnaye, who was Lieutenant

du Roi, under the Duc de Mazarin, the holder of this governorship, besides many others on account of his wife, left me the charge of the gates, which I caused to be guarded by musketeers. I placed a guard at the door of the prisoner's room, and being aware that Monsieur de Beaufort and the coadjutor had escaped from this prison, further made two musketeers sleep there at night, so as to watch the prisoner one after the other. Thus he could not escape me, and the King having kept him there, till he should have chosen commissioners to conduct his trial, no sooner was this done than I received orders to conduct M. Fouquet to the Bastille.

Besmaux had not done badly since he had become its governor. He had placed it on a different footing from that which it had been on when he had arrived, and, as the appetite increases by eating, he already had his eyes upon the great fortune he has since made, as well as adorning it by titles sufficiently pompous to correspond with the riches with which he reckoned he was about to endow his family. There was a house in the provinces which bore his name and to which he would much have liked to be related. He could only prove his descent from it through Adam and Eve, unless, to come nearer the present time, he had recourse to Noah, from whom, like this family, he really descended. But, knowing that with money one succeeds in everything, he proposed to the elder son that if he was willing to recognise him as a relation, he would make him a satisfactory present. This gentleman was nearly as poor as he was noble, which should have made him accommodating, but, as there are country noblemen who would deem themselves dishonoured

(in which they are not far wrong) were they to recognise a false relationship, this gentleman was of the same way of thinking as the late Marquis de Vesins, who would never recognise the Maréchal de la Meilleraye, who like him bore the name of La Porte, though he offered him a great sum to do so, and his influence as well. Being, I repeat, the same sort of man, he refused the offers of Besmaux, and though he tried again and again, the latter would never have succeeded, had not this noble had a son more venal than himself. Two thousand louis of eleven francs each have made him not only do what his father had always refused, but further furnish Besmaux with titles as if the eldest of the family, so it is he who now has all the "charges" of Montlesun, of which he has had an inventory compiled, which he shows to all his friends to prove that he is of good birth as well as a gentleman of Gascony.

Let everyone think what he likes about this: I also shall keep to my own opinion. What I do know very well, is, that if I am said not to be a "D'Artagnan,"[1] except on the female side, and only a "Castelmore," Besmaux is also said to be no more "Montlesun" either on the male or female side than a great big valet of mine is a "Champagne," though he bears that name! M. le Comte de Suse, a real "Champagne," will not recognise him, nor would any valet dare ask him to do so, because he has not two thousand louis with which to present him, such as Besmaux gave to

1 D'Artagnan's real name was Charles de Batz Castelmore, son of Bertrand de Batz, seigneur de Castelmore, and of Francoise de Montesquion. He assumed the name of D'Artagnan, which belonged to a younger branch of his mother's family.

"Montlesun." Nevertheless, as one must never despair of anything, should he ever some day chance to be made Governor of the Bastille, mayhap he will become one of the family just as the other became a "Montlesun." The Comte de la Suse is to-day pauper enough to do a great many things for such a sum, and even to be satisfied with half of it!

On arriving at the Bastille, I showed my orders to Besmaux, so that he should have the gates opened to me. They did not please him at all, for two reasons: one that he was to have no authority over my prisoner, the other that I was bringing in some fine fellows who would be likely to heartily caress Madame Besmaux, were she willing. There was no face-cloth, even had it been a double one, and even bigger than the one she wore, proof against their keen appetite. They were all people between nineteen and twenty years old, a marvellous age for the cult of ladies, especially when they only want to be asked. This would not have mattered so much, had Besmaux been left to look after the cooking arrangements. The hundred francs a day which the Surintendent had to spend might perhaps have consoled him for everything else, but as it was my duty to feed him for fear of his getting any note in his food, I perceived Besmaux so sad for some days that I thought he was going to let himself die of grief. The Commissioners who had meanwhile been chosen, assembled at the Arsenal under the name of the "Chambre de Justice." They had been drawn from a number of tribunals, some from one province and some from another, as if, it being a question now of judging a man accused of having robbed the whole kingdom, the whole kingdom must in turn judge him.

The King also delegated powers to this Chamber to try the contractors whom it was wished to sacrifice to the people's resentment, for they had robbed terribly whilst the war had lasted. They were immensely rich, so that their extravagance put even the princes of the blood to shame. Some there were who, foreseeing this tempest, had not been such fools as to put all their property in their châteaux, in their offices, or in palaces in Paris, as the rest had done. On the contrary, keeping most of their wealth in good bills of exchange and thus not being restrained by love of fortune, which usually affects even liberty itself, they withdrew from the kingdom in different directions.

M. Colbert had begun to superintend everything directly M. Fouquet had been arrested, and, as he was of a good enough middle-class family and had relations in the law, had thrust most of them into the new "Chambre," which he had just constituted. He thought thereby to honour himself and also make them do his bidding, since they could not do otherwise without forfeiting his protection.

The contractors who withdrew into foreign countries were the wisest, and all that could be done to them was to try them in their absence. A number were condemned to be hung in effigy, which, indeed, was carried out. However, as the sinner's death was not desired so much as his money, one was content with taxing those foolish enough to be caught, but it was at such a high figure that, though each of them was worth several millions and maintained besides that his Majesty owed him immense sums, it did not suffice to pay off the tax. One was taxed at nine millions, the others at eight, the others at seven, and those who

were only taxed at two or three hundred thousand crowns were regarded by the "Chambre" as unworthy of their wrath. Many of them rotted in prison in default of paying the tax or, perhaps, for being unwilling to do so.

Thus did the King at one stroke wipe out his debts, an example the nobility, which was exhausted by the war, would have much liked to be able to follow, but which was the more denied to them, since the beginning of the King's great power was the diminution of their own. M. le Tellier viewed M. Colbert's elevation with regret, the King giving him M. Fouquet's office, but under a different title from that of Surintendant. He was made Controller General of Finance, whilst making the King believe that he himself would be his own Surintendant. His Majesty was pleased with his moderation, whilst he yet managed to have more power than twelve Surintendants put together might have had. Madame Fouquet, who, during her husband's prosperity, had shown herself to be the finest lady in the world, did not copy her sister-in-law, but helped him as much as she could, and a number of his friends did the same, but in secret, because, according to M. Colbert, it was a State crime to side with such a guilty man. Guilty M. Fouquet certainly was, and he deserved punishment if only for having pensioned all sorts of riff raff, but there was much besides this against him, his least crime being, it was urged, his theft of many millions. Further, he was accused of having tried to make England declare against the King and concocted plots of rebellion in the kingdom, in case he should be arrested. Both these things were in reality true, but there was no other proof except some papers, giving directions as to

what was to be done to extricate him from prison, were he ever to be put there. They had been found in the chimney of one of his houses, and he maintained that they could be only regarded as a man's evil thoughts, for which he was not responsible, provided he cast them away. Besides, a proof that he had rejected them was that the papers had been discovered in a place, where they would not have been put, had he attached importance to their contents. The Comte de Charost, being in exile, could do nothing for him, and M. Colbert even tried to prevent any lawyer from undertaking his defence, causing it to be insinuated that, were anyone bold enough to do so, "lettres de cachet" would soon be issued to procure their exile.

Whilst the trial was in preparation, the Abbé Fouquet, who was more uneasy than ever since his banishment from Court, came to Paris several times *incognito*, and M. Colbert, getting wind of this, determined to catch him, although, far from hating the abbé, he should have loved him, since he had been the first to spread evil reports about his brother whose place M. Colbert now held. Nevertheless, Colbert, who was only anxious to prove to the King that the whole Fouquet family were rebellious, at once sent a courier to Avallon, a small town of Burgundy, to ascertain the movements of the abbé. This was his present place of exile, which had already been changed two or three times on his constant request to be moved nearer Paris, so that he might not have so far to go when desirous of visiting that city. He took good care, however, to keep this to himself, knowing he would be watched, and took most careful precautions to deceive his fellow townsmen. As the best of these was to feign illness, he was wont

to put his valet to bed in place of himself, and then send for a doctor from three or four leagues away as if he were very ill indeed.

This had already succeeded three or four times. The doctor, who did not know him, had easily mistaken the valet for the abbé, especially as they were both about the same age. He had also been just as easily deceived about his illness, being a doctor more in name than reality, as are nearly all provincial doctors, and even Parisian ones too. At first the chief men of the town had proposed to come and see the sham invalid in return for several good banquets the abbé had given them, but care had been taken not to open the door to them; for, as they knew the master better than did the doctor, they must have perceived the imposture. In order that they should not think this very odd, the false patient had the first time complained of attacks of giddiness. These poor Burgundians had taken this for truth and had whispered to one another that the abbé looked very like going off his head.

He was, by nature, rather inclined that way and his behaviour to his brother was a proof of it. The report of this spread through the provinces and thence to Paris, where it had been the more easily credited because he was known to be bearing his exile with impatience. As he had been in the habit of falling in love twelve months of the year, grief at being far away from his mistresses had already several times made him imprecate the order which was causing him to waste his time in a wretched hole, when he might have employed it so agreeably elsewhere. Everyone being, consequently, convinced that he was more seriously ill than was reported, no sooner had the

courier arrived at Avallon, than he was greeted with this news in the hostelry where he had alighted. Having asked the host, whom he had made come and drink a cup with him, how the abbé was and whether he had really gone to Paris as reports on the road said, the host answered that those who spread this rumour must be doing so to save the abbé's honour, for he was in no state to go to Paris, unless to be carefully taken to the asylum. The host proceeded to explain his meaning to the courier who, believing what he said, merely rested for an hour or two and then retraced his steps. He reported the news to M. Colbert who, equally credulous, was delighted at the news spreading, because he considered himself to be triumphing, when anything disadvantageous to the family of the Surintendant transpired. He even mentioned the matter to Hervart, who had been Controller of Finances with him, but with far more limited powers.

Hervart was one of the greatest milords in Paris and had a most splendid mansion there, built by himself at a cost of at least seven hundred thousand francs. He had besides a property at the gates of that great city which cost him even more, with a quantity of other wealth which called for his not being taxed too lightly by the Chambre de Justice! But, as Colbert and he had come to an understanding to rob together, during the Cardinal's lifetime, he had always been pointed out to the Queen-mother, and even to the King, as a man who had done the State great service. For this reason he was not pressed so hard as others, though he deserved not to have escaped under five or six millions. Be this as it may, M. Colbert having told him about

the abbé's insanity, Hervart rejoined that he did not know where he had procured such news, but it was totally false. If, indeed, disobedience to the Court and thinking only of amusement when one should think of crying went by the name of madness, he agreed that the Abbé Fouquet was one of the greatest lunatics in the world; but if he meant another kind of insanity, which people were usually shut up for, M. Colbert must allow him to suggest his altering his language. He would further inform him that the abbé had never been so sane as at present, a proof of which was that, instead of delighting in scandalising people with his follies, as he had done before his brother's disgrace, he now took great trouble to conceal them.

M. Colbert, not understanding his meaning, begged for an explanation, and Hervart, saying that it was not difficult, at once told him of the abbé's periodical visits to Paris *incognito*, so as not to be observed. To this Colbert retorted that it was true such a rumour had been current and, determining to punish such boldness, he had at once despatched a courier to Avallon to ascertain if the abbé was absent, as was said, or not. He had found him stretched on his bed overcome by giddiness and had even been informed that the sufferer had been attacked by such a malady for more than fifteen days past, which totally contradicted all the rumours which declared him to have played such a wild trick exactly within that space of time.

Hervart listened quietly, and, perceiving he had finished, made reply that he had always believed that, if one wanted sound information, one ought to apply to ministers, but, if he might say so, if their other news was like this, too great reliance must not be placed

upon such an opinion. He did not spend so much in spies as did M. Colbert, yet he was better served. He knew for certain that the abbé had been at Paris only forty-eight hours ago. Colbert wanted to know who had told him this, and Hervart replied that he had been told by those who had not only seen the abbé but eaten and drunk with him. Being further pressed, he at last admitted that it was one of his mistresses, for he was a man of pleasure who even had the reputation of indulging in strange vices. Colbert was astonished at Hervart not being jealous, but the latter explained that, the day before, the mistress of the abbé had invited his mistress to sup with two men—one of them the abbé, and the other a courtier unknown to them whom he imagined to be La Feuillade.

M. Colbert told his Majesty the whole story. The King liked La Feuillade and liked to hear of his jokes: so, telling his minister it was not right to accuse or punish him on a mere suspicion, he ordered him to thoroughly clear up the affair. Colbert might well have stopped anything of the kind occurring in future by sending the abbé to "Kimpercorentin" (Quimper-Corentin), which seems to be the place where people one does not want to hear of are sent, or to that other place beyond the Pyrenees, where there are as many bears as reasonable beings. But, either from unsatisfied vengeance or to injure La Feuillade in the King's reputation, he told Hervart to promise his mistress a thousand crowns from him, if she would warn him when the abbé returned to Paris. There would have been no need for much mystery, if his information had come from anyone else but women of pleasure. There were two witnesses already against

La Feuillade but, as the testimony of these frail ones is not taken into account by justice, and also being afraid of being asked how he had become acquainted with them, M. Colbert preferred to be patient rather than risk his reputation by being precipitate in his revenge.

He disliked La Feuillade because, on the day I had arrested M. Fouquet, he had been in the courtyard of the Castle of Nantes and had called out as he passed that he might rely on his being his servant for ever, except against the King's interests. He had been very pleased with himself for doing this and distinguishing himself from all the Court, but the King had not liked such behaviour and had spoken to him to that effect. However, he had pretty well stopped the King's mouth by joking about it, saying that it would be strange if he might not give a word of consolation to a man in return for the number of fine louis d'or he had from time to time received from him. He had a pension of two thousand crowns and, if M. Colbert would be as generous, he was ready to assure him that he would make the same speech or a better one to him when in the same plight. The King had laughed at the sally, but M. Colbert did not do so when he heard of it and was annoyed at the idea of his ever being treated in the same way as M. Fouquet. Accordingly he did all he could to ruin La Feuillade but succeeded no better than M. le Cardinal (who had also tried) had done. His Majesty was never long angry with La Feuillade who, having found means to please him on his arrival at Court, soon got round him again, and indeed, after many ups and downs, we see him to-day on better terms than ever with the

King, who has even honoured him with the title of duc and given him the most important office at Court, so much so that he now aspires to the baton of a Maréchal of France, which apparently he will gain, if the war we have just begun lasts only three or four years more, as it looks very much like doing.

However, to return to my subject. Hervart informed M. Colbert that his mistress would not fail to do his bidding if she got a chance. Lights of love often have more honour and keep their word better in their profession than a number of people in high places who pass for being honest men. For example I will cite "Ninon Lenclos," a woman celebrated for having been accommodating enough to her neighbours, and also famous for the fine answer she made to an officer of the Gardes du Corps sent to take her off to a convent by the Queen-mother during the regency.

On being told that her Majesty would leave her free to choose a convent, she replied without hesitation and with marvellous presence of mind, that she would be taken to the Franciscans, since she could be conducted to no better place.

She was not far wrong, for the five or six hundred young monks who are always there are only too capable of satisfying a woman's appetites, however great they may be! The Queen-mother, when she heard of this answer from the officer, was so struck by its cleverness, that she revoked her order and allowed Ninon to live in her usual fashion, on the assurance of old Guitant, captain of her guards, that "there was no more honourable courtesan in all Paris." He ought to have been a good judge, having, if one believes the voice of slander been mixed up with this kind of person

all his life and even enjoyed himself so much as to be unwilling to marry. Comminges, his nephew, would have done no great harm in following his example. It would have stopped him hampering himself with a woman who made a god of her complexion, though she is but a doll. Besides, he has lost a portion of his body which is necessary for marriage, it having been carried away by a cannon shot; however, by way of compensation, his son is well dowered with what his father lacks. He is a great water-drinker, but likes the ladies none the less for that.

Be this as it may, his uncle having saved Ninon's bacon, she has always continued to ply her calling in an honourable manner. Perhaps some day she will think about reforming, for everything has its time. Many others besides her have lived more scandalously and have yet not renounced Paradise. There is always time to be penitent even at the last sigh. It is true this is very late and a most dangerous time to wait for, but, without amusing myself further with moralising, my witness as to the honesty of Ninon is that, M. Dangeau having deposited a hundred thousand crowns with her, she gave him a much better account of it than our friend De Bar did of a like sum to the Maréchal de Mordiger during the last few years. Dangeau had no cause of complaint whatever, while the poor maréchal has never recovered a single farthing of his money.

I do not know if M. Colbert had heard speak of a similar story, but what I have just spoken of had not yet happened, and Dangeau at that time was not so opulent as to have a hundred thousand crowns of ready money. I do not know, I repeat, if this minister had heard anything like it, to have such confidence in a

prostitute, but anyhow he was satisfied with the measures he had taken and did nothing else, as if sure of success. Nevertheless, placing his faith in such a person was to build upon sand, and she kept her word very badly, though she had given it so positively to Hervart.

The abbé having been some time without revisiting Paris, and M. Colbert pretty well guessing what had happened—that is, that the frail one had broken her word—he sent a spy to Avallon to let him know when the abbé should have one of his convenient illnesses, so as to be ready for him. He knew he could not leave the town and not have recourse to the same artifice as before, without everyone knowing it.

The lengthy absence of the abbé from Paris was caused by the mistress of Hervart having confided to her friend the request which M. Colbert had had made to her, and she had told her to warn her lover to take care not to be caught. The abbé profited by her advice and, being a generous man, at once sent her a diamond of the same value as the promised sum to her for his betrayal, thinking to make up to her what she had lost by her kindly action. The mistress of the abbé did not prove ungrateful either, as she did not wish to lose her lover, who was more generous to her than to other people. She also gave her friend a present, though a less valuable one than the abbé's. This worked wonders, and, as everybody likes their own interests, the mistress of Hervart, overcome by gratitude, swore to her friend that she would sacrifice a hundred Colberts for her and for the abbé.

At last the abbé thought that the minister was off his guard and that he might, after such a long time,

risk a visit to Paris and his mistress. He mounted an English horse at a door at the back of his lodging, and, having ridden on it to the end of the first stage in a scarlet dress and cloak like an officer, reached Paris the next morning whilst people thought him still abed. He at once went to see his charmer, who, being fond of the military, found him a thousand times more amiable in his novel costume than his usual one. They abandoned themselves to love like starving people who had not seen each other for a long time. Nevertheless, it was not too certain that either of them had been fasting too long—especially the lady, whose profession did not accord with such lengthy abstinence.

Be this as it may, having passed the remainder of the day together without desiring any other company, they sent towards evening for the mistress of Hervart, together with a conseiller of the Parlement—Faideau by name, who was an intimate friend of the abbé. They supped together and thoroughly amused themselves, after which the two couples retired, for Hervart's mistress made no scruple about being unfaithful to him. The next morning having come, the mistress of the abbé, to whom he had given a purse of a hundred louis d'or, wanted to go and buy a dress with part of it: so, being the first to rise, under the pretext of ordering dinner, she snatched up a cloak, resolved to take a turn in the Rue aux Fers, where the best silk vendors of Paris were at that time to be found. As luck would have it, going out she cast her eyes on a door the other side of the street nearly opposite her own and perceived there an evil-looking man enough, who looked like what is called a police spy.

This is what she thought he was, especially when

she saw him look fixedly at her as if for some purpose. Nevertheless, she pretended to notice nothing, for fear lest, were she to appear startled, it might arouse his suspicions. She felt sure this had something to do with the abbé, as she had nothing on hand, and the man could have no reason for staring his eyes out at her as he was doing.

At any rate she started, not to go to the place she had at first intended, but in order not to show, by going back, that she had observed anything and was about to take precautions. Indeed, she could not have done this without ruining the abbé, and mayhap herself as well, since every day mistresses are made responsible for their lovers' faults! She did not, however, go far, merely going to her cookshop-keeper to counterorder the meat she had ordered for dinner, for she very prudently deemed that, were she to let it be sent to her house, it would at once make the spy think that she had company and that it must be the man he was looking for. She did this as quickly as she could, and, having retraced her steps, she noticed that the man still remained at the place where she had left him. He was there for the abbé, as she had rightly imagined. The spy sent by M. Colbert to Avallon, having the day before learnt that the abbé by current report was kept in bed by disorders in the head, had posted back all day and all night as M. Colbert had ordered him to do, so as to let him know what was going on. The minister had at once sent for the man he was wont to employ when he wanted anyone arrested, and the spy of whom I have spoken was placed there as a sentinel.

The abbé was still in bed when his mistress returned and, on his asking her if she was going to give him a

good dinner, she replied that she had just given orders for him to have to go without it that day, because they had something much more important to think of at present than amusing themselves. At the same time she told him what she had just seen and having alarmed the abbé, who was naturally timid, thereby, he jumped out of bed and went to awaken Faideau, who was still asleep. Having informed him of what he had learnt he asked his advice and Faideau, after agreeing with him that the position was a very awkward one, advised him to immediately return to Avallon, for, were he to be caught, he would doubtless be taken to the Bastille and, as M. Colbert would very likely send someone to arrest him on his return, there was not a minute to be lost before setting out. The abbé enquired how he was to go out, now that a spy was at the door, but his friend made answer that there was a remedy for everything except death and he would certainly get him out of this mess, only he must be careful not to let himself be caught on the way.

Sending at once for the warden of the Capucins des Marais who was one of his friends, the latter soon appeared with a companion, for the convent was close by; Faideau whispered in his ear that he must either do him a good turn or have nothing to do with what was on foot. He wanted his own or his companion's dress to save a man who was being watched. This would be a charitable action and one which could certainly not fail to be very agreeable to God. The warden hesitated a little before making up his mind, but, at last, having done so on the advice of his companion, though he was his superior, he stripped himself of his robe and put it on the abbé whom he did not know.

The trouble was now to find a beard to go with the dress. The warden would not consent to Faideau's proposal, which was that he should cut his own off and give it to his friend nor was his companion more tractable, declaring that, if he returned to his convent without a beard, all his fellow monks would throw stones at him, and it was in vain that Faideau spoke of the necessity one was under of being charitable to one's neighbour. Finally, there being no time to be lost, the only thing he could think of was to have the two girls, who were there, shaved, which having been done, a false beard and moustache were made of the hair and affixed to the abbé's face with starch, at the risk of their falling off when he should have gone four paces. The newly-made Capuchin then left with the monk and passed under the spy's very nose without exciting his suspicions. The abbé went straight to Faideau's house, where he was to take one of his country suits and leave his own with the Capuchin. He was also to take a very fair saddle-horse and then set out, having confided his safety to God. All this having been done with incredible luck, he left Paris by the Porte St. Antoine, his head wrapped up in his cloak, and went twelve leagues in two hours and a half without once looking behind him.

The abbé stopped at a place where lived a gentleman Fincour by name (whose son is now one of the Musketeers whom I have the honour to command). He was a friend of Faideau, who had written to him to, at all costs, have the bearer of the note given a good horse by one of his friends, because he had just killed a man and must escape quickly. Fincour lived only a quarter of a league away from an abbaye called

Barbeaux, which belonged to the abbé, but nevertheless knew him no better on that account than if this abbaye had been a hundred leagues away. Accordingly, believing all Faideau had said, he gave the fugitive one of his own horses, which was just as swift as his first mount.

The abbé was now in his own part of the country, since, besides being close to his abbaye, he was not very far from Vaux le Vicomte, which was only two leagues off. Not desiring, therefore, to delay a minute from fear of being recognised, he at once set off to continue his journey. Nearing a village five or six leagues further on, he saw from afar four men riding post, who on the postillion's horse had what seemed to him to be tunics bound with blue. Fear that they were archers with their officer, perhaps, on their way to arrest him at Avallon, made him check his horse so as to let them go ahead, but no sooner had they entered the village, where he knew the posting place to be, than he started off again, and passing behind the village, got a long way ahead of them before they had thought of leaving it. They were like some horses which are used to drinking at every ford they pass, and having had one pint had followed it up by another—and then yet one more, till it seemed as if they were about to pitch their tent in the place. Whilst they were drinking, the abbé continued his flight, and was out of sight of the village when they were leaving it. His horse, at last becoming exhausted, he took post just as it was about to collapse, and told the postmaster that he had thought his horse would have lasted up to his house, where he was going to see his wife who, he had been informed in Paris, was at her last gasp, but feeling it about to fall under

him, he thought it best to abandon it and take post. He would send for it in two or three days, and would beg him to keep the animal till then.

He told this story, so that, if by chance his pursuers should see the horse, they might believe what the postmaster should say about it. After this he spurred on once more, and, as it was not the first time he had ridden post, completely distanced the men sent after him and reached Avallon two hours before them. He did not, however, take the postillion right into the town but dismounted fifty paces away, telling the man a story which he had fabricated. He confided to him that he had a love affair in the town and was unwilling to be observed, for fear of the husband's becoming alarmed if he should think him within a league of his wife: he accompanied this with the present of a crown and then sent the postillion back. Wrapping his cloak around his head, the abbé entered his house by a back door and at once got into bed. His servants had been ordered to continue telling the same story, during his absence, about the disorders in his brain.

All the inhabitants thoroughly believed this, and would frequently tell one another that they would not be in the abbé's place for all his wealth!

Two hours after he had gone to bed, the four men he had met on the road arrived in the town and put up at the best hostelry. Ordering a room, the most presentable of them summoned the host and asked him how Monsieur l'Abbé Fouquet was, and if he still remained unwell. They had hidden their cloaks, but, as these sort of fellows always show their calling, the landlord pretty well suspected what they were. He replied, therefore, that he did not know why they asked this,

but if it was with the intention of harming the abbé, he might tell them that he already had so much misfortune that he needed no more. At the same time he tapped his forehead with his finger, making them understand by this gesture that it was there that the abbé's misfortunes lay. The master of these men was a lieutenant de la prevôté de l'hôtel, and the others were guards of that company.

Perceiving himself discovered for what he was, he left with his men and, making no answer to the landlord, betook himself to the house of the abbé. He had orders from M. Colbert to see with his own eyes whether he was in the town, whilst a watch was constantly kept in front of his mistress's lodging. At first the servants of the abbé wanted to refuse this officer the entry, because their master when going away had given that order and had not yet withdrawn it. The lieutenant was delighted at this, thinking it a sign of their master being absent, as M. Colbert had insinuated he would be. He knew the abbé from having seen him at Court a thousand times: so, it being only necessary for him to go into his chamber to see it someone else had been substituted for him, this officer showed his staff of office to the servants, in order that he might enter without trouble.

All the doors were then flung open to him, so great is the respect shown to the little ebony and ivory of which this staff is made, and, having gone upstairs, he found the abbé (who was playing the sleeper) in his room.

Pretending to awaken with a jump, on hearing the curtains of his bed being drawn, and extravagantly simulating the madman, he spoke to this lieutenant as

if he had been the King who was taking him for his captain of guards, and said that he would teach him his business! Would anyone else but he enter his prince's room staff in hand? The lieutenant was quite dumbfounded at these words. He had certainly heard rumour at Paris declare that the abbé was mad or nearly so, but, M. Colbert having disabused him of that idea and declared it to be a mere artifice to cover his secret journeys to Paris, he had become so persuaded that this insanity was all a sham as to now very nearly fall down from surprise.

The abbé also committed further extravagances, such as calling for his first gentleman of the chamber to arrest this officer, so much so that the lieutenant, having seen more than he wanted, returned to the hostelry, after telling the abbé's valet to look after himself and expressing his great pity. He said further, as an excuse for his journey, that he had come with an order of the King, but the state in which he saw his master was so pitiable that he did not think he would be blamed by the ministers for not executing it. It was, he might inform him, to command a change of residence, but he had better not mention it to the abbé, for fear of it making his health even worse than it was. All this was but a concoction, but the officer had to make some excuse for what he had done.

The four men only stayed at the hostelry long enough to eat a morsel and rest for a moment. They then at once returned to Paris, where the lieutenant went to tell M. Colbert that the rumour about the madness of the abbé was only too true. He also described what he had seen with his own eyes, which the minister did not believe so sincerely as he pretended to do, for other

things had occurred which had inspired him with a suspicion he would have much liked to have cleared up. However, he did not know how to set about it, as it was very difficult.

The spy, whom the mistress of the abbé had perceived at the door, had seen two Capuchins leave her house, as I have before said, that is to say, the real and the false one. The warden had remained at the house of the fair one to bear the brunt, and, from fear of having to go to bed, had assumed the dress of the abbé, which did not go well with his great beard. Faideau, who had been lucky enough to save his friend, was now puzzled how to get the Capuchin away without the spy seeing him. The monk could not go out in his red dress, except with his nose in a cloak, on account of his great beard, which would have caused him to be taken for a masquerader or some burgomaster of the thirteen cantons, who had had himself rigged out in the old clothes market to look like other people. This would not have mattered if he could have got off in one of these two characters, for to pass as a masquerader or a Swiss is not such a great misfortune, but, besides that, it was not carnival time and the warden was not the man to risk showing his nose out in the street from fear of someone recognising him. People would no doubt have imagined that he had only disguised himself to go on some frolic, and, as he had to watch over his reputation, Faideau did not deem such a thing could be so much as proposed to him. The risk was even greater, were he to go out with his head wrapped up in his cloak, because it was not certain whether the spy would not put some affront upon him. No

doubt there were archers in a wine-shop close by, and, as the man might have thought it was the abbé concealing himself, he must not risk being captured from fear of afterwards having to declare his name. Faideau knew a minister's great power, and that, once in his hands, escape was not so easy as from those of anyone else.

At last, finding nothing but difficulties on every side, Faideau sent to tell the companion of the warden, who had accompanied the abbé to his house and had been instructed to await further orders there, that he was to take a carriage towards the evening and bring back the dress of his superior. This was a vehicle not at all suited to a man of his calling, but, the warden having inserted his personal permission in Faideau's letter, the monk made no bones about it. A valet of the latter went to get him a hired coach and took it to a door where he was waiting with his parcel, for Faideau would not let him take it from his house to avoid any evil consequences. He made no mistake in doing this, as will presently be seen. He further was careful to coach everyone as to what they were to say should any enquiry be instituted, so that they might all give exactly the same answers.

The Capuchin got into the coach, and found it more pleasant than his sandals, so that the journey seemed nothing at all. He told the coachman to pull up at the door of the mistress of the abbé, which was at once thrown open without his having any need to knock, a servant having been placed there for that purpose by Faideau. But in spite of these precautions the spy did not fail to see the Capuchin alighting with his parcel. He could not make this out at all, being the more

puzzled at seeing three things which were to be marvelled at—to wit, a Capuchin in a coach in Paris, which perhaps has never been seen before, except in the case of their general—a Capuchin quite alone, which is further very extraordinary (unless he should be some debauched monk escaped over the convent walls going to some house of ill-fame), and finally—a Capuchin carrying a great parcel. These three things being quite enough to put him on the alert, the spy ran after the coachman to find out where he had picked him up, to which the man replied, "in the street," which stopped his questioning him further, since it would be of no avail. The man now redoubled his efforts to discover what would come of this. Meanwhile, he thought what many others in his place would have done, that is, that this Capuchin was a renegade who had come to enjoy himself with the mistress of the abbé, who had not the reputation of being a "vestal," though the abbé was as fond of her as if she had belonged to him alone, which was enough to make him think himself happier than he really was—good and bad luck most often consisting only in one's imagination, so that he who thinks himself happy is really so, while he who believes himself to be miserable is so likewise.

Be this as it may, the coach, which had been paid before the Capuchin had ever set foot in it, having gone off directly he had got out of it, the spy thought more than ever that this monk was going to sleep in the house, but he was very surprised when, a quarter of an hour later, he perceived two Capuchins departing instead of the one who had entered. Had he that day been drinking, as sometimes was his way, he would at once have thought that it was wine which was doubling his sight, but,

having indulged in no dissipation, he received this apparition much as a Capuchin who had been fasting all day might have done. Following the two monks, he perceived from their venerable appearance that they were really two Capuchins, and before long they reached the convent, where the porter gave a cry of delight at once more seeing the warden, who had been away since morning and was almost believed to be lost. The spy then asked the porter where the good father had come from, and, the man telling him what he knew, the spy concluded that the two Capuchins he had seen enter the lady's house first of all had not left together when he had supposed, and, pondering over the matter, eventually arrived at the right conclusion.

Faideau availed himself of the spy's absence to go home, but, before leaving, he once more coached the mistress of the house, so that she should not contradict herself if she should chance to be interrogated. The other girl also went home after having learnt her lesson, so that everything would have been for the best had not M. Colbert been informed of what had happened. He agreed with the spy, whose conclusions coincided with his own, and divined that his bird had flown under the guise of a Capuchin. Proceeding to send for the warden, he asked what he had been doing at the house of such a girl? Whom had he found there on his arrival and at what time had he left? The warden made answer that he had gone there to incline those ladies to a general confession and that no one else was in the house, adding that he had only left towards evening. To this M. Colbert sharply rejoined that, if he needed so much time to incline all his penitents to be converted, he would do but little

throughout the year, and that he was very much afraid that in spite of his dress he was not speaking the truth. He knew for certain that two Capuchins had entered the house at nine o'clock and the same number had left it an hour later. Another had arrived at six in the evening in a coach with a large parcel, who had then come out with another Capuchin to return to his convent. Thus four Capuchins had made their exit whilst only three had gone in, and he must ask him to explain the mystery, or otherwise he could not answer for the consequences. The warden who, after the example of his good father, Saint Francis, thought that one might lie to oblige a friend, provided that one could safely do so, replied that he could not explain what he was enquiring about—it was beyond his comprehension, and these matters were quite new to him. As a matter of fact, he spoke the truth, for he did not know who it was he had saved nor of his differences with the Court. He further added that his Majesty might do all he liked with him, but he had the right of swearing that he and his companion were the only two Capuchins who had entered the house, and whoever had declared that two monks of his order had left an hour later had lied. He would, indeed, take an oath to the contrary, were it permissible for him to do so. Everything else was equally untrue, so that he might assure M. Colbert that whoever had made this report had done so only to conceal the bad watch he had kept on the door of the house, always supposing he had been placed there as a detective.

M. Colbert, seeing that the warden would make no confessions, sent him away after some more questions. He nevertheless continued to threaten that, as he

would say nothing of his own accord, he would be made to speak by force. I do not know if he meant to be as unpleasant as he declared, but, at any rate, he sent orders to the lieutenant-criminel to seize the mistress of the abbé and have her taken to prison. This was at once done, but without any result. M. Colbert discovered nothing by it, for she would never say any more as to what the warden had done, so that, after the lieutenant-criminel had questioned her again and again, he was obliged to leave her alone and abandon his enquiries.

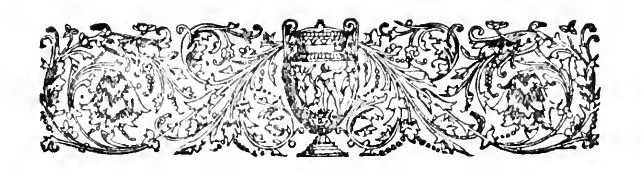
M. Colbert was infuriated against the girl and the warden when this was reported to him, and had her transferred to Vincennes, where she remained a State prisoner for five or six years. He would have treated the Capuchin in the same way, had it lain only with him, but fearing lest his Order should complain to his Majesty, he wanted to speak to the latter first. The King, who was very pious, would not consent before hearing his reasons. To arrest a Capuchin, and a warden too, seemed to him an act opposed to the respect he bore to religion! M. Colbert wanted to tell him all I have just described, but his Majesty did not think it a case for severe measures, very rightly declaring, as indeed was true, that even were his ideas correct, it might be that the warden did not know to whom he was lending his dress—most likely he had not been told that it was the Abbé Fouquet. It was the spy who should be punished, and not the lady. As for the monk, he had only done what his calling demanded, since a Capuchin should show himself charitable to everybody.

Matters were in this state when the lieutenant de la Prévôté de l'Hôtel returned to Avallon, so his account

was not received as he had expected. Nevertheless, the affair was soon forgotten, because M. Colbert had a more important one in hand. He was bent upon having M. Fouquet condemned to death, especially since the populace, whom he was beginning to treat harshly, showed, by pitying the prisoner, that it would have been very glad to see him acquitted. Some, indeed, wished more than this, hoping that he might return to favour, because they thought, as was true, that they had been happier in his day than they were at present. On these grounds they did not scruple to stigmatise his impeachment as unjust, the more so as a quantity of scandalous things really did take place, which showed that his ruin was intended at no matter what cost.

Hofman, an honest enough man, was procureur-general of the Chamber of Justice. His honesty would not have procured him his post, since Colbert loved justice less than an entire submission to his wishes, all he had thought of being that, as he had married one of his relatives, he must do his bidding. Hofman described to him every day what had taken place in the chamber and how, notwithstanding that a famous lawyer named Beure had undertaken the prisoner's defence, there was hardly a judge who had not already condemned him to death. Such news delighted the minister, who was weak enough to believe that he would never be safe till he had caused this head to fall.





VI.

THE Abbé Fouquet (who passed at Court for a madman partly on the strength of the report of the Lieutenant de la Prevôté de l'Hôtel, and partly on account of previous rumours) having now no further need of any disguises, since his mistress was at Vincennes and he could no longer go and see her, no more talk was heard of his keeping his bed with his pretended affections of the head. Meanwhile, as he was very incensed against Hervart, who by his reports to M. Colbert had been the cause of this girl's misfortunes and very nearly of his own, the abbé resolved to be avenged. This was difficult enough in his present condition. No credit was attached to his statements at Court, and even if he had said all kinds of things against him just as much as he had said about his brother, that is, that Hervart was a great robber, it would not have expedited his revenge in any way. There were people enough who said this without his doing so, but they did not injure his enemy, who had already paid a hundred thousand crowns to the Chambre de la Justice in liquidation of the tax he had reason to be afraid of. He had his receipt in due form and had had it confirmed at the Cour des Aides, so that the remainder of his property was safe

against all attack, just as if it had been honestly come by. Nevertheless, he was so conceited that he had taken care not to admit that he had been obliged to pay this money. He much preferred to let it be thought that he had been treated differently from the other robbers on account of the pretended services I have before spoken of.

This was a great piece of vanity in a man of his nation, which usually prefers a crown in the pocket to any praise, for he was a Swiss by birth and had always exhibited the characteristics except on this occasion. Be this as it may, the abbé, perceiving that it would be useless to attack him, since he had already been clever enough to protect himself, thought of giving him a dig in another quarter where he was just as sensitive. This could only be through his mistress, of whom he was as jealous, so to say, as a beggar of his wallet. Accordingly, bringing all his guns to bear, the abbé did not fail to succeed as he desired. He first of all thought of Faideau, who might make Hervart jealous by continuing to see his mistress, but the latter had been so frightened when he had seen the other girl taken off to Vincennes, that he had preferred to relinquish her friend's acquaintance than continue a friendship, the commencement of which had already had such sad results. He was afraid of the same fate for himself, so much so that, had he dared, or rather had he not been detained by an office which prevented him leaving Paris in spite of himself, he would much have liked to go and travel to Rome or elsewhere, so as to let the storm pass away. Indeed, he was now on the watch, as if about to be arrested at any moment.

The abbé, therefore, was badly received by him, when

he proposed he should share his revenge. Faideau replied, God forbid that he should accept such a proposal, far from it! If he would take his advice, he would leave the whole thing alone without thinking further of it. His reason for this was, that he ought to remember a proverb, which was a very true one: "One should always let sleeping dogs lie." The abbé, seeing this string fail him, made use of another, which he could be more sure of, since it depended only on himself. He wrote a letter to Hervart, with his left hand, in which he informed him that he would be very silly to continue spending money. as he was doing, on a wretched woman who made no scruple about being false to him. At a secret meeting between the Abbé Fouquet and a girl now at Vincennes, she had abandoned herself to Faideau, though she had never seen him before. Since then she had met him several times as well as La Basinière, who had given her some presents, amongst others, a fine diamond worth at least a thousand good crowns. A proof that this was merely the truth was, that he had only to search in the place where his mistress usually put her jewels and he would certainly find this diamond. No further details of her trickery were necessary. He must not be surprised at being given this information, for the writer was obliged to give it, being indebted to him for much, and he would be ungrateful beyond conception to allow this deceit to continue any longer.

The writing of this letter was exactly like that of a woman of pleasure, whose calligraphy the abbé had been studying for I do not know how long a time, that is to say, since he had become a regular out-and-out

gallant. His statement about the diamond was a very safe one, since he himself had given it to the girl. Besides, he was risking nothing in declaring it would be found amongst the other jewellery, since it was pretty clear it could be nowhere else. At any rate, Hervart was the more struck with this letter from an idea that it came from a maid of his mistress, whom she had sent away, having detected her in some intrigues she did not like. Indeed, though she herself liked amorous sporting, she did not want other people to follow her example. This was why she had sent her away, and, as it had not been without disturbance, Hervart thought that the woman had nurtured such resentment that she was taking it out of her mistress when she least expected it. An additional reason for his thinking so was, that he had shown this girl some kindness whilst in his mistress's service. Everything, therefore, fitted in to aid the schemes of the abbè, which were to render Hervart jealous and make him spend some unpleasant hours.

There was only one circumstance in this information which might have made him suspicious, which was that his mistress had never had anything to do with La Basinière, at least as far as he knew: but as he was now at the Bastille and did not seem likely to come out of it for some time, because several millions were asked of him, which he was in no condition to pay. As I say again, as he was powerless to get out of his troubles, because he had spent just as much as he had stolen, the abbé had no fears of Hervart's going to ask him if this was true or not! Accordingly, he gave him that bone to gnaw, knowing he would digest it but with difficulty. It was, besides, enough for him to

know that La Basinière (who was a vain man and who, in his prosperous days, had made no more account of a thousand crowns than of a farthing) was a professional gallant and, consequently, more likely than anyone else to make such a present. Indeed, as he had been Trésorier de l'Épargne before having been put in prison, and a stroke of the pen was all that had been needful to get what he liked, he spent money as easily as he made it pass into his purse.

Hervart being convinced, as I have just said, that all the contents of the note were but truth, flew into such a great passion with his mistress that, had he been able to box her ears upon the spot, he would not have refrained for an instant, for he was a man to resort to violence with his mistresses just as well as with his servants, so that this was not the first time he had contemplated it. He had, indeed, even already carried out this intention, and so his mistress was quite accustomed to being beaten. He was a dangerous man to deal with and hit out with all his might, and, what is more, his blows left their marks for more than a day. His hand was as large as a shoulder of mutton and as dry as that ot a man hanged in summer. There was nothing to modify its roughness, whilst, if one is hit only by a plump and fat hand, it hurts but little.

God having given Hervart, not such fine hands (for it would be lying to speak thus of them), but at all events such good ones, he did not forget them when he went to see his mistress, and, no sooner had he settled some business with M. Colbert which had delayed him, than he set off to her house. His eyes looked quite wild, which at once frightened the fair

one who feared him no less than death itself when in such a state. Attempting to ask him what was the matter, he gave her no time to finish her speech, and instead of thanking her for her solicitude, began by giving her as an instalment of his rage a couple of boxes on the ear, and as many kicks in a tender part of her person. The poor girl did not understand the meaning of this brutality and began to cry bitterly, without, however, softening her lover, who continued to ill-treat her and added another kick to the two previous ones. She let herself fall to the ground like a dead woman, but she was dealing with a man too wily to be taken in by this. Hervart very soon made her get up again by blows, telling her to abandon her sham faintings. Thus did he behave, jeering at her after having treated her so badly.

It might not have mattered, had he sung the song to her of "Arise, fair sleeper," which might mayhap have made her forget all his outrages, on account of the word "fair," which no woman is indifferent to, but instead of such a term, he only called her "Madame la putain de la Basinière," a name which came to his lips sooner than that of Faideau, because it was more well known at that time. At all events, it produced a marvellous effect upon the poor woman, who had drawn back into her shell, no more nor less than does a snail when one tries to take it by the horns, for she believed that one of her intrigues (which she well knew to be numerous) had been discovered. Perceiving, however, that she was being accused of something which had never taken place, she got upon her legs and asked Hervart if it was on account of his being a dreamer that she was obliged to put up with all the blows he had just given

her. At the same time, she threw herself upon him and gave him a punch at the risk of getting four herself, and at last appeared so formidable an adversary to her lover that he resolved to have a truce with her. He drew back three paces, and motioning to her to discontinue the combat as he had something to say, she obeyed, as she had nothing to gain by not doing so.

He proceeded to tell her that her protestations of innocence did not make him think her any the less guilty. She must justify herself otherwise than by behaving like a fury, and give him the keys of her cupboard, and were he to have accused her unjustly, he would make satisfactory reparation.

The lady was delighted at this proposal, wishing to be once more on good terms with him, for he gave her two thousand crowns every year to come and see her once or twice a week, which was a stipend she had no desire to lose. Accordingly, she gave up the key he wanted, believing that Hervart had only asked for it because he thought he should find some love letters of the man he had mentioned as being her lover. She was not so stupid as to keep any there (not of his, since she knew La Basinière only by name, but of others whom she knew a little better!) Consequently, anticipating his discomfiture, she began to rail at his jealousy. Hervart found the diamond mentioned in the letter of the abbé, and having no doubt but that everything in it was true, as this very important detail had been no lie, he ill-treated the girl to such an extent, without saying anything else but call her a prostitute, that this time she really did fall down from not being able to stand it any longer. He did much worse than this, breaking I know not how many

mirrors in her room, though not all his own gifts. This roused her more than the ill-treatment had done, and she began to cry out "Thieves! Thieves!" directly she saw one of these mirrors flying in pieces. All the neighbourhood assembled at her shrieks, not knowing what they meant, and the coachman and the lackeys of Hervart who were at the door were more puzzled than the rest. Knowing that their master was in no very reputable house and that curious things were wont to happen in such places every day, they feared that someone was trying to strangle him, or at least make him give up his purse. Nevertheless, they were in error to think such a thing, since it was only a woman's voice they heard, and the probability was, that nothing of the sort could happen to their master without the mistress of the house having an understanding with the assassins or robbers. But they reasoned in their own way and wanted no more, so, being carried away by an indiscreet zeal, one of them ran to the commissaire to tell him to come and see what was going on in this house. He came and knocked at the door in an authoritative manner, and the fair one's servants having hastened upstairs to her aid, he found no one below to let him in and so had recourse to a locksmith, who soon forced the door open.

Hervart thus found himself surprised all of a sudden, which rather confused him. It was in no way creditable for a man of his standing to be discovered wrangling with a girl, for she had got up to stop him from continuing to damage her mirrors. The two were, consequently, mauling one another about when the commissaire arrived, and, his entry having stopped the battle, Hervart became as furious with him

as with his mistress. He declared he had no business to come and poke his nose into all this as he was doing. What a man like himself did was no business of his, for his province was only to look after thieves and scoundrels. The commissaire, who was a man of spirit, was offended at such words, and answered haughtily, so that Hervart, perceiving he would not gain the day with him, went downstairs and got into his carriage. He was afraid of getting the worst of this, were he to continue taking a high tone.

The commissaire drew up his report, and, having received the depositions of the lady and those of her servants, he prepared a "procés verbal," dealing with the distruction of her mirrors and the other damage she declared Hervart had committed. The lady then thought of looking in her cupboard where he had left the key, and failed to find her diamond there. This redoubled her tears and wails, and was something further to swell the "procés verbal." At last, the commissaire having gone away, the fair one sent for a sedan chair and went to find Faideau, to ask his advice and protection in such a serious predicament. She told him of the theft of the abbé's present by her lover, and Faideau, who was ignorant of his friend's part in all this trouble, found much to blame in Hervart's behaviour. He blamed him the more on account of knowing whence this diamond had come, and therefore how baseless his jealousy was. Nevertheless, he advised the fair one not to take proceedings, but rather to have Hervart spoken to, for, after such a great mistake, he could not fail to become sensible. In this manner he dismissed the girl, and at once wrote an account of what had

happened to the abbé: he thought it right to do this, if only by way of consolation for the trick Hervart had played him. The abbé wrote back that his news had given him pleasure, but that he had, nevertheless, not been so surprised as he doubtless expected, because he himself had originated the whole affair. He went on to give the details of his malicious trick, which did not especially grieve Faideau, because Hervart had caused him to go in fear for a long time. Meanwhile, his prediction as to the end of the whole affair became true. The girl having caused Hervart to be spoken to and told that she would consent to be burnt alive, if she even so much as knew La Basinière, he returned her diamond to her. Not that he thought she was speaking the truth, but he was afraid of being taken for a swindler, were he to deny having taken it or keep it after admitting having done so. She was not content with this, and wanted her mirrors to be paid for, since he said no more about a reconciliation. This was the most difficult thing of all, but at last, seeing himself threatened with an appeal to the law, he preferred going to some expense than to have himself further inveighed against in the Châtelet, and even by the whole of Paris. Indeed, there was already too much talk about the trouble he had got into, the very children, so to speak, getting bored with it.

Meanwhile, the prosecution of M. Fouquet was proceeding, and was being carried on so briskly that it was clear that his death was desired. M. le Tellier who had never been a great friend of his, had at first done his best to precipitate the prisoner's doom, but perceiving M. Colbert every day getting more and more into the King's good graces, and likely to eventually get above

him, though he had only been his clerk, he secretly altered his methods. It was maintained (at least certain well informed people are my authority) that nothing now happened in the council with reference to this poor prisoner which the family of M. Fouquet and his lawyer were not informed of. If this was the case, jealousy was being pushed rather far, since M. le Tellier knew that Colbert was not alone in wishing that M. Fouquet should die. The King himself wished the same thing, as everyone knew, though this desire, which was criminal in the person of Colbert, was in no way so in that of his Majesty. The King of England had secretly let him know (and those who are well informed are sure of this) of all the attempts the Surintendant had made to cause his country to espouse his interests, so that the King knew for certain that he was guilty. Nevertheless, he did not dare make use of the knowledge his Britannic Majesty had imparted to him, because he would have been wanting in the secrecy which had been asked of him. Be this as it may, whether the family of the prisoner obtained its information from M. le Tellier or someone else, certain is it that his lawyer defended him so well, that his case lasted nearly three years without being able to be decided.

During the whole of this time I remained in charge of M. Fouquet, only occasionally going to the Louvre when the King sent for me. The prisoner was in a fine enough room for a prison, with a view on the bastion, which is on the right hand of the road coming from the Porte St. Antoine, to enter the Grande Rue which leads to the throne, that is to say, the place where their Majesties station themselves on the day of their entry

when they receive the compliments of the "Cours souveraines du Châtelet et de la Ville." The view also embraced the Faubourg, and, as there were houses not more than four hundred paces from the window, I posted sentinels there who, without appearing to do so, took care no signal should be made to M. Fouquet. Nevertheless, whatever precautions I could take, I was caught.

The Marquise de Sevigny,[1] who was one of M. Fouquet's particular friends, went into one of those houses and found means (I do not know how) to communicate something to him and obtain a reply. This had so much to do with his affairs that, Beure being instructed about it, M. Colbert, who had stopped him short on a certain point, was quite astonished, after more than two months of silence, to find him awakening exactly as a man does from a faint. He gave a very powerful answer and demolished everything he had said. M. Colbert was quite surprised, suspecting that someone must have communicated with the prisoner, and at once sent for me to ask how such a thing could have happened, considering that I had been commanded by the King to make sure that no one should approach the captive. I was even more surprised at his words than he could have been at the answer of Beure. Meanwhile, as I felt myself to be quite innocent, I maintained to his face that no one had spoken to M. Fouquet since he had been under my care, and that I had left him no more than the shadow leaves the body. Seeing me so confident, he enquired who it was I was wont to

1 In one of the letters of Madame de Sévigné to M. de Pompoune, she describes seeing Fouquet guarded by d'Artagnan from a house looking upon the Arsenal (27th November, 1664).

leave in charge when the King sent for me by letter, or when he himself had me told to go and see him. I replied, that I left all my soldiers there with their officer, because the one was as it were the spy on the other, and so, unless all should be bribed, no mishap could occur. He rejoined that my precautions were sound, and no more could be asked of me in reason. Nevertheless, still continuing uneasy about what had happened, M. Colbert questioned me as to whether I could not guess how it had come to pass. I answered that this was an absolute impossibility, and all I could say was that, were my own life at stake, I could not give him the slightest information.

M. Colbert next proceeded to make enquiries as to the sort of room my prisoner occupied, and whether it were possible that anyone should have spoken to him or slipped in a note. He asked also whether it might not have been done, whilst he was going to mass, either by the priest or by some musketeer clever enough to do so without my perceiving it. I rejoined that all this could not have been contrived unless the devil had had a hand in it. There was indeed a room beyond that of M. Fouquet, but it was separated from his by a wall more than twenty-four feet thick. I had examined it from one end to the other before putting the prisoner there, and neither crack nor hole existed in it. In front of his room was the chapel where he heard mass, which building I further examined every day before taking him into it, to see that no note had been placed in his seat. On each side of it there was only the court-yard and the garden. Above was a room, the key of which I kept, and which no one but myself entered; above that was another, not indeed under my control,

but which, nevertheless, no one went into, as it was only used for the torture. I had had the door barred with a double bar of iron, so that no one might enter without my certain knowledge. In addition to all these precautions, I further took that of making my prisoner precede me when going to mass, and allowed no one whatever to approach him, not even St. Mars nor any brigadier. He might judge from all this if it was as easy to deceive me as he appeared to have got into his head.

M. Colbert had the patience to listen to me from one end to the other without missing a single word. He said that all these details were much to his liking, and, to speak the truth, it seemed I had acted like a man of intelligence; nevertheless, he did not know what to say to me because, notwithstanding all my arguments, he was quite certain that he was not mistaken. I do not know whether he spoke to the King or not, but his Majesty said nothing to me. Nevertheless, some days later, he asked which of my musketeers acquitted themselves of their duties in the most careful manner, but, as he frequently made such enquiries, and liked knowing what each man was fit for, I did not in any way infer that what had passed between M. Colbert and myself was the cause. Meanwhile, I gave the King a very good account of St. Mars, who was a prudent and conscientious fellow. Indeed, I feel sure that I did no prejudice to what has since been done for him.

Whilst the reform of the finances was in hand, and their former chief was in such a sorry plight, M. le Tellier for his part did not forget to carry out the same plan with regard to the troops. The slack discipline which had always prevailed, had manifested

itself on a thousand occasions to such a degree, that people left the army when they liked and, provided one appeared at the parade of the commissaire, which always took place on a certain day, nothing more was asked. The generals had often inveighed against this abuse and against many others, and especially against the "free companies"[1], which should have been the best, but were the worst. Those of the King's household, amongst others, were abominable because, instead of being composed of gentlemen or of officers who had been disbanded, as they should have been, they consisted only of country people who sought in this way to escape the "taille." These persons were not fit to serve, nor even to be in the army at all. Though of a calling which should have accustomed them to work—to wit tilling the earth—they were likewise accustomed to dine and sup at a fixed hour, and to sleep in their beds every night. This was not the way in the army, and for this reason they preferred to abandon their pay to their officers, rather than expose themselves to the inconveniences inseparable from their calling. Their captains fell in with this perfectly easily. Accordingly, there was not one of the companies of the Gardes du Corps, which was not on this account worth close on eighty thousand livres of income. The company of gens d'armes was not worth less; Navailles alone, who still commanded the light horse of the guard, and was more conscientious, took rather more trouble to see that his company was filled with individuals more worthy of their profession. This often led to quarrels with his wife, who was not at all like him, and who

1 *Compagnies d'ordonnance:* these did not belong to any regiment.

wore herself out every day with telling him that he should copy such and such people, (especially the Marquis d'Albret), and that he was underselling his services. She was by way of having the upper hand of him; but, nevertheless, he would not take her advice about this. He too, wanted to become a Maréchal de France, as Albret had done, and as a first prince of the blood was not arrested every day, and besides, even were such the case, he was not sure the work of conducting him to prison would be allotted to him, as it had been to Albret (which had gained him the baton of a Maréchal), he was well content to continue doing his duty, so as to have nothing to reproach himself with, if by chance he should not succeed in obtaining what he wanted.

Most of these lieutenants, especially those of the Gardes du Corps, were like their men, except some who were men of rank and had seen some service. The rest were utterly pitiable, so that it was inconceivable how they had been allowed to rise to such posts, since they possessed no qualifications for them. But this abuse had prevailed during the Cardinal's lifetime, so that, so to speak, the executioner's son who brought him money, would have been preferred to a man of rank or worth who had none, or who lacked even part of the sum. La Salle, a lieutenant of gens d'armes, a man wont to bluntly speak his mind, often inveighed against such comrades, and even against the Maréchal d'Albret. Not that he was a stupid man, but his grief at nothing being done for him, after I do not how many years' service, often made him lose his head. For this reason M. le Tellier and his son, as well as other people, were often the subjects

of his anger. He spared only the King, and I do not even feel sure, from the lengths to which his rage sometimes carried him, if he would have had more respect for him than other people, had it not been that he was aware that walls have ears. He did not question the fact, that merely a piece of paper signed "Louis" was necessary to make him drop his talk and pride a good deal. Indeed, he was proud beyond belief, but a brave man, and one who had always done his duty. He had been present at all the sieges and battles which had taken place before the peace, and had such a good opinion of himself that he thought he deserved the baton of Maréchal de France as much as anybody. Nevertheless, it was insane of him to even think of it, since he was as far from such an honour as is heaven, so to speak, from earth!

The King, in order to succeed in establishing good discipline amongst the troops, wished to hear the opinion of the officers who had served the longest, cavalry and infantry alike, so as to select the good and reject the evil in their advice. The Vicomte de Turenne was more listened to than the others, a circumstance which so displeased M. le Tellier and his son that a secret jealousy arose in their minds, which still exists, though they do not always dare to show it. True is it that this general has in some measure encouraged it by the great contempt for them which he has always shown, in which I do not think, with all due respect to him, he has done too well. When the King chooses ministers, it is not for us to criticise his choice, but on the contrary to submit to it by honouring them as one is obliged to do. I further know that, at the present

time, the Vicomte de Turenne has not been able to keep silence as to the way this campaign, which is the one of 1672, has been conducted. He declares that the Marquis de Louvois is the cause of all Europe being ready to rise against his Majesty. This he attributes to his having wanted to keep all the fortresses we had taken, and to his having refused the peace which the Dutch had come to ask for in our own camp, with conditions entirely advantageous to ourselves. M. le Prince sometimes says quite as much, and that we should demolish all these fortresses, so as to always have an army to make the power of his Majesty respected; but as he is more diplomatic with ministers than the Vicomte, he takes good care not to say it as loud as he can. It is only with his most intimate friends that he dares thus to unbosom himself, because he is well aware that, when a man has as much to lose as he has, he must not always speak what he thinks, especially when it concerns people of such standing as those at present under discussion.

But leaving all these reflections on one side to thoroughly immerse myself in my subject, the King, after having in this way taken the opinion of his principal captains, made several admirable regulations for his troops, which laid the foundation for that good discipline which one sees reigning at the present time. This did not overjoy a number of officers, and especially some captains who had only entered the service to rob their soldiers, whom most frequently they left so ill turned out that one might say that they were as naked as one's hand. Indeed, they had neither shoes nor stockings nor hat, which killed some of them, especially at the end of campaigns, so that one saw companies

which consisted of not ten men all told. An effort was also made to purify the Gardes du Corps of unworthy officers and guards, black sheep with which these companies were filled from top to bottom. Meanwhile, before this could be done, war was believed to be about to break out between the two kingdoms on account of an event which happened in London and which seemed like a premeditated plan of the Spaniards to insult his Majesty. To well understand this, one must go back to former events.

The King of England's anger against the Cardinal had burst out so strongly that all the populace had become aware of it, and, as they still continued to dislike our nation, they had fomented their King's anger as much as they were able, and tried to get this prince to break with his Majesty. To this end they had made use of several pretexts, and especially of a declaration which M. Colbert had made, "that the King should establish as many manufactures as he could in his kingdom, so as to dispense with getting anything abroad." This displeased them greatly, because by this his Majesty would be dealing a blow at their cloth industry, part of which was used up in France. Neither did it please the Dutch too much, who also sold us a lot of their sheets in addition to much other merchandise, which M. Colbert likewise intended the kingdom to do without. The Spaniards, who were always on the alert to find out something to hurt us, deeming this opportunity a good one for them to inflame these Powers against us, did their best with this object. The English Parliament willingly listened to them, whilst the Netherlands showed themselves more reserved in their ideas, saying neither yes

nor no, desiring first of all to see what the great plans of M. Colbert would come to, and whether they would harm them as much as the Spaniards tried to make out.

The King of England for his part did not approve of the rupture with our King which was proposed to him. He desired to enjoy some rest after all the troubles he had endured whilst he had been banished from his realm, and, in addition to this, he had a special esteem for his Majesty, which caused him to wish to live on good terms with him. As this was not his Parliament's idea, nor yet that of the Spaniards, they both together planned to coerce him in spite of himself. The grandeur of France frightened them both equally, so that politics were now joined to the natural aversion they both felt for our nation. They were undertaking a very difficult thing, considering the sentiments held by his Britannic Majesty, which it seemed almost impossible to alter. All Europe was at peace except Portugal, which was at war with Spain, and there was not the least cause for making it begin again between the two Crowns. This was another reason why the King of England had refused to enter into their ideas, or, at any rate, it had served as a foundation for his refusal.

This being the case, the Baron de Batteville, Spanish Ambassador in London, undertook to find a pretext for a war. It is thought that this was with the consent of the most important members of the English Parliament. As for the Baron de Batteville himself, he was certainly much too wise to have dared attempt a stroke of this kind of his own accord, for he was not the man to overlook the fact

that he was about to get the King, his master, into a mess from which he could never extricate himself alone. The strength of France had been greater than that of Spain at the conclusion of peace, and had greatly increased since then. Not only had the chamber of justice paid the King's debts with one stroke of the pen, but it had also filled his coffers to such an extent, that never had a King of France been so powerful. This is why it was suspected that the Parliament of England had an understanding with Batteville. Be this as it may, without going further into the question, this is how this ambassador acted, to get Charles II. and the Dutch to declare for the King, his master.

For a century or more, Spain (at that time in a marvellous state of splendour) had attempted, under the reign of Philip II., to dispute the precedence of France. Charles V., father of that monarch, had exercised it not as King of Spain, but as Emperor, for he was both together. His son, making use of the past as a rule for the future, claimed to enjoy, as King of Spain, the power which his father had only exercised as Emperor. This had given rise to serious disputes between the two kingdoms, which had never been settled, because our kings had only had right on their side, whilst the Kings of Spain had had might on theirs. It is antiquity and grandeur which constitute the precedence of a state, and there had been kings in France nearly seven hundred years before there were any in Castille, whence it followed that his Majesty's cause was a just one and theirs worth nothing. Besides, with the exception of the reigns of Charles V. and Philip II., his son, the grandeur of our monarchy had always far exceeded that of the Kings of Spain. At any rate,

Batteville, finding nothing more suitable to his plans than to revive this claim, which had appeared silenced for the last thirty or forty years, seized his opportunity on the occasion of the Comte de Brahe, Ambassador Extraordinary of Sweden, making his entry into London. Our ambassador was the Comte d'Estrades, who was lieutenant-general of the King's armies. He was a strong and clever man, well able to obtain satisfaction for the insult which Batteville contemplated putting upon him, if the matter had had to be settled between them. But as, in these kind of affairs, it is not the masters who take action but those whom they send with their carriages, it came to pass that the English, to the number of more than two thousand, took the side of Batteville's people, to make him obtain the advantage he had in view. They first of all cut the reins of the horses drawing our ambassador's carriage, so that, the coachman being unable to proceed, all his men could do was to try and do the same thing to those of Batteville, but in this they could not succeed. The ambassador in question had guarded against such a proceeding by having had these reins made of soft iron covered with leather. Blows were exchanged on both sides, but, as it was an unequal match, some servants of our ambassador were left on the ground, whereas the other party escaped without anyone being killed or wounded.

Estrades at once sent a courier to his Majesty, to inform him of this outrage, whilst he demanded an audience of the King of England, to complain to him of what the English had done for Batteville. This was at once granted, and Charles II. gave him a promise that all justice should be done, which indeed he did

not fail to carry out. However, this was as nothing in comparison to the reparation which our King proposed to obtain from Spain. He immediately despatched a courier to his ambassador there, with orders to discover for his Catholic Majesty, whether Batteville had done this of his own accord, or had been made to do it.

The Archbishop of Ambrun, elder brother of La Feuillade, was the King's minister at that court. The King of Spain, who had already learnt what had happened from a courier sent by Batteville, at once suspected what was on foot, when he learnt of the arrival of the courier from his Majesty. He had already informed his council of the events in London and asked its advice as to how he should parry the thrust which the French Ambassador was going to deal him. The council had thought it best for him to feign illness so as to gain time, but, as delaying his reply was not everything, it was debated what he should say to the ambassador when he should be obliged to see him. It was eventually determined that he should resort merely to generalities, without committing himself in any way. He was to say, for instance, that he disliked violence, and as he disapproved of that used by Batteville would at once recall him. The King of Spain at the same time sent off different couriers to England, Holland, Sweden and Denmark, to see if these Courts were in a mood to oppose the growing greatness of Louis XIV., of which the Spanish ambassadors were ordered to make them suspicious. The minister of our King was not pleased at his failure to obtain an audience, strongly suspecting that, though the King of Spain had taken to his bed, he was not very ill. Nevertheless, as he could say nothing as long as this pretence was kept

up, he took patience till it should be abandoned, thinking the King would tire of it before he did. Meanwhile, in order that his Majesty should not be worried at having no news of him, he sent back his courier with a packet, whereby he let him know of what was happening at Madrid. His Catholic Majesty did indeed soon get tired of keeping his bed without being ill, and no sooner was he up than, being unable to any longer delay giving the Archbishop an audience, he made the reply which I have just spoken of. The minister thought it captious, and, as he had orders from his King to withdraw unless given satisfaction, he began to threaten his Catholic Majesty with this.

The Queen-mother, having learnt the terms the two Kings were on, begged the King, her son, not to give heed to his resentment. She even undertook to make the King, her brother, give an explanation, which is the reason she personally sent him a courier to say that Louis XIV. wanted another kind of satisfaction to the one he had hitherto received and that, without it the two kingdoms would relapse into a war even more cruel than that which had just ended. He must look to this and give a positive answer.

The Spanish Council re-assembled on the arrival of this courier and, as it was desirable to gain time and await answers from England and the other Courts I have mentioned, a resolution was come to, that the King of Spain should write and tell his sister that he was going to send the Marquis de la Fuentes to France as Ambassador Extraordinary, with orders to settle this matter to the satisfaction of his Majesty. Louis XIV. was less pleased with this reply than with the other and was quite determined to recall his

ambassador and prepare for war, when the Queen-mother further persuaded him to await the arrival of the Marquis de la Fuentes. The young Queen also added her entreaties to those of the Queen-mother, and, as she had just given a dauphin to France, which overjoyed the King and all the Court, his Majesty could not withstand two mediators as powerful as these ladies were.

Nevertheless, the Marquis de la Fuentes took a long time in setting out, because the news which the Spanish Court had received from England, Holland, and the two northern kingdoms was in no way pleasant, for none of these powers were willing to make war on behalf of Spain. Such a refusal should have hastened the departure of this nobleman, but, as the Spanish King yet intended to cause Charles II. to change his mind, he made the Marquis de la Fuentes feign illness, just as he himself had done. Eventually, however, finding himself baffled in his endeavours, the marquis suddenly recovered without the help of any doctor. Nevertheless, it was a sad recovery for him as well as for his master the King. His voyage to France could not be an agreeable one, since he was only going there to renounce a right Spain had paraded since the time I have spoken of. Accordingly, he travelled only by short stages, on the pretext that he was not yet entirely recovered from his indisposition.

This delay wearied Louis XIV., who was keen about everything which affected his glory and fame. Nevertheless, as the ambassador had set out and could not be perpetually travelling, he deemed that he must be patient. Meanwhile, the Spanish King would have

only been too glad to get out of this affair with as little disgrace as possible. This being so, his Holiness intervened to terminate matters in a friendly way. The nuncio at Paris had two or three interviews with M. de Lionne, without coming to any settlement, his Majesty requiring a written declaration that the Spanish King repudiated Batteville and renounced the precedence, whilst the King, in question, would only agree that his ambassadors should not in future appear at ceremonies in which French ambassadors took part. This state of things lasted for five whole months, which exhausted the patience of Louis XIV. M. de Lionne then told the nuncio that, if this was all the Spanish had to say, there was no need for the Marquis de la Fuentes to come to Paris. He was then at Orleans, where he continued to pretend illness so as to save appearances, but De Lionne's speech to the nuncio having succeeded in curing him, it was eventually agreed between him and the nuncio that, instead of the declaration being given in writing, he should speak it in the presence of all the foreign ministers then at the Court. This was the same thing: but, either because they did not think so or hoped it might be forgotten by posterity, the Spaniards preferred it to the other alternative. The King, who had insisted upon a written declaration, made difficulties about giving in, but having eventually yielded to the prayers of the two queens, the Marquis de la Fuentes finished his voyage. A day or two days after his arrival the King gave him an audience. All the princes of the blood were there on the right of his Majesty, whilst the foreign ministers were on his left. The four Secretaries of State had each a desk

before them, so as to take down the declaration to be made by the ambassador. Nothing could have been more formal or mortifying for him, but he had, nevertheless, to drink the cup, so true is the saying that "necessity is above the law!" The Spaniards foresaw the inevitable loss of Flanders, were they to persist in that air of grandeur which they had assumed in the middle of the last century, or some time before, but from which they had for some years past degenerated. Be this as it may, the ambassador, after having made every one wait for a certain time, eventually arrived with all the usual ceremonies, and declared in the presence of this august assembly that the King, his master, had been very displeased when he had heard of the attack of the Baron de Batteville, and desired nothing so much as to keep up the good understanding which existed between the two Crowns; so much was this the case that, as the behaviour of that ambassador had been totally opposed to it, he had not only recalled him, but also given orders that he should repair to Madrid to explain his conduct. He had, meanwhile, commanded all his other ambassadors, at whatever Courts they might be, to abstain in future from attending all ceremonies which the Ambassador of France might attend, from fear of a like misunderstanding about precedence resulting.

All this speech had been arranged beforehand between the nuncio and De Lionne, in order that the ambassador might not omit an iota of it. It meant a good deal, if taken in the proper way, but as it had not been declared in formal terms that his Catholic Majesty renounced this precedence, which had already been disputed on a thousand other

occasions, it was a subject of consolation to the King of Spain and to his ambassador.

The Pope,[1] who on this occasion had intervened for others, five or six months later himself, had need of the intervention of others in his behalf, in a difference which he in his turn had with his Majesty. This arose in regard to our ambassador at Rome, who was much worse used than D'Estrades had been, both he and the ambassadress being personally attacked. This ambassador was the Duc de Créqui, a man who was as proud as it was possible to be. On his arrival at Rome, he had not called upon Augustin Chigi, brother of the Pope, nor his other relatives, thinking it beneath a duc and peer of France and the representative of the first King in Christendom. This offended the persons in question, but the duc made light of their anger. Alexander VII. was then on the throne of St. Peter, which he had mounted much in the same way as Sixtus V. had done, of whom it is said that he used a fox's skin to attain it and kept his place by means of a lion's! Copying Sixtus, who had leant upon a stick so as to make the conclave believe that he had not two days to live—copying Sixtus, who, I repeat, once elevated to the Pontificate, cast aside his stick and became as straight as a candle, Alexander VII. (who as a cardinal had perpetually played the pious man, even to have his coffin always on his bed, to teach him, as he said, that he would soon be in it) no sooner had the tiara on his head than he got rid of this gloomy sight and displayed all the magnificence and pomp of a great king. Being

1 Fabio Chigi, elected Pope in 1655, as Alexander VII. He died in 1667.

of such a temperament, he consequently ordered the Cardinal Imperial, Governor of Rome, to do all he could to mortify the ambassador, in order to avenge the insult to his relatives.

The ambassador was lodged at the Farnese Palace, where he kept up great state as the representative of the eldest son of the Church. He was, however, too conceited and should have been more circumspect. He had most particularly instructed his servants to prevent any *sbirri*[1] approaching his palace, which is a right all ambassadors enjoy. The Cardinal Imperial, having, it is said, posted a man and some police, with orders to play the part of a debtor pursued by his creditor, the false debtor fled towards the Farnese Palace,[2] crying out loudly for help. Thereupon the ambassador's people attacked the police, who were supported by some Corsicans of the Pope's guard who usually only came up when called upon, and their presence seems a proof that the whole thing had been arranged beforehand. At any rate, they and the police got the worst of the encounter and were obliged to flee. Shortly afterwards, however, they returned with others of their number and besieged the palace on every side. The ambassador had been out in the town at the time of the first skirmish, but had meanwhile returned, and was quite puzzled as to what was going on. Appearing on the balcony to make the rioters disperse and threatening to have them hung, it was by a miracle that he escaped death, for a volley was fired at him and the bullets came quite close. From this he soon perceived that these people were more like

1 They formed a kind of police force.

2 This occurred on August 20th, 1662.

wild beasts than reasonable beings and withdrew to his room, where he was joined a moment later by his wife, who had had a luckier escape than himself, several shots having been fired into her carriage whilst returning from the town, which had killed a page and a footman on the spot! All the French who chanced to be in the streets whilst this was going on were maltreated, and some were killed before they could escape, there being terrible disorder throughout Rome.

Such an insult being sufficient to gratify the vengeance of the duc's enemies, they caused the siege of his palace to be raised, as if unwilling to allow such riots. The ambassador asked for justice from the Pope and the Cardinal Imperial, who pretended to have had nothing to do with all this. Though a promise was made that satisfaction should be given him, they connived at the escape of the ringleaders, and the duc, perceiving this, did not go out without being accompanied by some of his people, who carried good muskets and pistols. In addition to this, he had a guard round his carriage, partly cavalry, partly infantry. This did not please the Cardinal Imperial nor the relatives of his Holiness, who thought this ambassador was defying them by acting thus in the middle of Rome. The Cardinal, therefore, sent all the Pope's guard to surround the Farnese Palace, having the duc told that he did this only for his safety, because he had made himself so odious to the people by his behaviour that he could not answer for his life if he went out. His idea was to keep him as it were besieged on this pretext and to crush his vanity, which could not fail to be hurt by such treatment. The duc well knew what to think of all this and did not

at all scruple to speak out. He was aware no complaints of his would have been attended to, but that, on the contrary, the riots had only been reported seven or eight days after they had occurred, and no trouble had even been taken to save appearances.

His only consolation was, that he knew he had a good master and one powerful enough to take vengeance for the insult. He had let him know of what had happened and was constantly sending him couriers. No sooner did the King hear from him than he ordered the papal nuncio to leave Paris in twice twenty-four hours, and at the same time sent thirty musketeers of the company of M. le Cardinal (which is to-day the 2nd Company of Musketeers) to escort him to the Bridge of Beauvoisin. Casaux, their commander, had orders to treat the nuncio roughly enough by way of reprisal for the treatment accorded the ambassador. The nuncio tried to protest, but, as he had to deal with a little man with whom there was no more joking than with a monkey, he had to be patient till he got out of his hands. His Majesty likewise sent orders to his ambassador to leave Rome and retire to the states ot the Grand Duke, which he at once did. All this made the Pope understand that he would have to explain matters, as the King of Spain had done: he was accordingly careful to take precautions in good time. He tried to get his Catholic Majesty and all the Princes of Italy on his side, but the Spanish King, though willing enough on account of his jealousy of Louis XIV., was so feeble, without good support, that he asked for time in which to answer. The Princes of Italy, after quickly holding council, refused point blank, much preferring that there should be war in Flanders

or Catalonia than in their own country. This is why the Venetians proffered their mediation to his Majesty to arrange matters with the Pope. Some other Italian Princes did the same, but the King had to be coaxed before accepting it. It seemed to him that, after such an insult, matters should not be so soon arranged, but that rods should be shown to the guilty, even if he had no intention of chastising them.

Whilst this was happening, the King of Spain was trying afresh to make the English King declare against his Majesty, on the pretext that it was more to his advantage than he thought to oppose the formidable grandeur to which he was every day attaining. Indeed, the King, by a policy of his ministers much to his own interest, was abasing the nobility, and especially all those who had enough power left to promote troubles in his realm, such as he had seen during his minority. He had already suppressed the post of Colonel-General of the French infantry, which had become vacant by the death of Bernard de Nogaret, Duc d'Épernon, who had had himself called "Your Highness," just as boldly as if he had been descended from the blood of some sovereign. Never had a family risen so quickly as his: but, as things which grow speedily do not usually last long, with him ended the glory of that house, which had been so puffed up that the old Duc d'Épernon, a favourite of Henri III., had dug his spurs into several members of the most august parliament of the realm, because it wished to indict him as being suspected of the assassination of Henri IV.

The reason why the ministers wanted to abase the nobles was because they would not consent to be crushed by them, as they had been by the Cardinals

Richelieu and Mazarin. Indeed, his Majesty was every day becoming more powerful, but, notwithstanding this, the Spanish King could not impair the good terms on which Charles II. was with our King, and so he was obliged to inform the Pope that he had better arrange his reconciliation, for nothing was to be hoped for from him.

His Holiness, baffled on every side, bitterly regretted having pushed Italian effrontery so far. He was in no condition to cross swords with us, and the King had already despatched some troops under the Marquis di Bellefonds, who were to assist the Dukes of Parma and Modena, who complained that the Pope was retaining possession of certain places[1] against the stipulations of the treaty of the Pyrenees, which ordered their restitution. These troops were to be followed by a large army, the command of which the King had thought of giving to the Vicomte de Turenne, but that general had not been able to decide on changing his religion, though he would have been offered the sword of Connétable had he done so. Consequently, his Majesty had settled that M. de Turenne should not lead his army against the Pope, so that it might not be said that that very Christian King employed a heretic to destroy the power of the head of the Church.

His Holiness now seriously made attempts to ward off the coming storm. He sent the Abbé Rasponi to the Duc de Créqui. This abbé managed to catch him before he had crossed the mountains and loaded him with flattery, which somewhat softened the duc, but, notwithstanding this, the latter would not consent to intercede with the King, declaring that these

1 Castro and Ronciglione.

negotiations were now not his affair. Repulsed in this quarter, the Pope resolved to yield to the wishes of his Majesty, and a conference was opened at Pisa to arrange matters. The Abbé Rasponi represented the Pope and the Abbé Bourlemon the King.[1] It was decreed that Cardinal Chigi, nephew of his Holiness, should betake himself to France, as legate, to assure his Majesty that neither the Pope nor anyone of his household had had any share in the attempt directed against the ambassador and ambassadress. That Dom Augustin should, for his part, write down the same declaration and leave Rome till such time as the legate should have had an audience of his Majesty and obtained pardon for the attack. The Cardinal Imperial was also to go to Paris to justify himself to the King, into whose hands he was to confide himself, so as to be punished if adjudged guilty. The whole Corsican people were, by a solemn decree of the Pope, to be declared incapable of ever serving in the States of the Church and, to preserve a durable monument of the reparation accorded to his Majesty, a pyramid was to be erected opposite the quarters of the Corsicans, on which this decree was to be engraved in letters of gold.

Cardinal Chigi, in due course, came to France with the Cardinal Imperial, and the King received them both like a prince who merely felt as much resentment as his glory required him to do. He gave the legate an audience at Vincennes where he purposely went. The legate, a handsome good-looking man, trembled when he saw the King (so much was he impressed by his appearance), but was quite reassured at the first

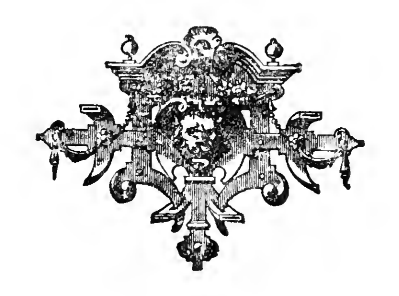
1 February 12th, 1664.

words his Majesty uttered. The King had a magnificent entry into Paris arranged for Cardinal Chigi, and he was so delighted with all the courtiers, who vied with one another in doing him honour, that he had as much trouble in going away as he had in coming. On his departure from Rome, he had been afraid of finding an overbearing and contemptuous Court and was enchanted to find quite the contrary. If report speaks truly, he even let his heart be captured by the charms of a beautiful lady and one who was well worth the trouble of being loved. Perhaps this is the reason why he was so unwilling to go.

The Cardinal Imperial having also had cause to be content with his reception, the King sent back the Duc de Créqui to Rome, whom the Pope, from policy, welcomed better than he had done the first time. The relations of his Holiness were also obliged to follow his example, and the legate was especially attentive to the duchesse, for people declare that it was she who had touched his heart. In any case she bore no grudge, and as all the French glory in imitating their monarch (who had given the Cardinal a good reception), she followed his example and gave him every reason to congratulate himself on her politeness.

The county of Avignon, which had been seized by the King's troops, was restored to his Holiness without waiting for the arrival of the legate in France. Bellefonds returned from Italy with Peguillin, who to-day calls himself Comte de Lauzun. He served under him as Maréchal de Camp, and had attained this post just like a mushroom, one sees spring up in a morning, of which there was no trace the previous evening. For a cadet de Béarn, he had already

pushed his pony forward none too badly, though it is nothing to what he has since done! Nevertheless, I suspect that the remembrance of so many honours, now that he has just fallen so low, is by no means agreeable to him. To have become, as he did, Captain of the Gardes du Corps, his master's favourite, and be on the eve of marrying a great princess, as remarkable on account of her merits as by her lofty birth, and now to find oneself shut up within four walls in the Citadel of Pignerol, are two different conditions which only accentuate one's misfortune! But, putting these thoughts on one side, I must add that the Maréchal du Plessis, who had obtained command of the army which was to act independently of that of Bellefonds, did not have the trouble of recrossing the mountains, because he had not crossed them when the Treaty of Pisa was concluded. Nevertheless, he had already started, so that the Pope did well not to delay longer in making peace, because he would otherwise have had reason to repent of it.





VII

THIS affair having been settled, the Court now thought only of amusement. The King's age, his health which was marvellous, his good looks, and his wealth also tended towards this, and above all the policy of the ministers, who asked no better than that the courtiers should make themselves as great beggars as possible, so that they might be more submissive to them. They had found it written in the memoranda of M. le Cardinal, that the King would never be absolute nor they themselves as authoritative as they might desire, whilst the nobility could get on without the Court. Accordingly, so that all should vie with one another in ruining themselves, they made many things a point of honour which entailed their inevitable destruction. Some pensions which the King cleverly distributed did even more than their words. Everyone who ran after such rewards unconsciously spent his capital, and his doing so threw him into a position of such great dependence upon the Court, that it was then impossible for him to withdraw from it.

Whilst this was going on, I still continued to guard my prisoner, and he who had been the most lively

man in the world had become so quiet that one would have said that it was another individual with the same face. He had regulated all his hours neither more nor less than if he had been in a convent. He knew what he had to do when he had prayed to God (by which, as was right, he began the day). This was to take up a book and read. When he had read for an hour or two, he took ink and paper and commented upon his reading. He next heard mass, then walked in his room till dinner; when he had dined, he had half an hour's meditation, then resumed a book till four in the afternoon; at four o'clock he again took up his pen, not to comment upon anything as in the morning, but to write something original. Afterwards he would walk or look out of window. Supper then appeared, and thus the days passed, one after the other, always in exactly the same way, except when he was examined. I would then personally conduct him before his judges, by a covered gallery, which had been specially constructed for fear of the other prisoners seeing him. For as there were some who enjoyed the freedom of the courtyard, they would have had to have been shut up, and their windows even covered over, to stop them seeing him pass, as was desired.

One of M. Fouquet's clerks, named Pelisson, was a prisoner like his master, but they did not communicate in any way. This had been strictly enjoined upon me. The écuyer of M. Fouquet was there also, a well made young man and very handsome. Nevertheless, it would have been well for him if he had not been so good looking, and had possessed a more balanced mind, which would have helped him to support the severity of prison life; but, having abandoned himself

to despair at finding himself shut up within four walls, his brain gave way, and he became quite mad. The first sign he gave of this insanity was burning his clothes, even to his shirt. As he had several suits, he was made to put on another, when the man who was wont to bring in his food had reported his behaviour to Besmaux; but he did just the same with this as he had done with the first, so that some time after his master had been sentenced, he was sent to the asylum. As for Pelisson, he lived pretty much like M. Fouquet; but as he was in a room with an inferior view to his, or rather one from which (to be more accurate) there was no view at all, he indulged in a merry occupation during a part of the day. He had a thousand pins bought for him and, taking them one after the other from their paper, he would scatter them on all sides of his room without leaving one behind. He would then pick them up again, and passed his time in this way. This is a strange occupation for a man of great sense, which he undoubtedly is; but observe also, to what a state such an imprisonment reduces people! Whatever store of sense a man may have, there are many moments when he gets beyond himself! He cannot always occupy himself with great things, and it is even better to employ oneself in picking up pins than to indulge in idle fancies and abandon one's mind to despair. Nevertheless, Pelisson did not long remain in the useless state which caused such behaviour. He found friends about the minister, who informed him that, because he had been clerk to the surintendant, was no reason that he should have taken part in his errors. He for his part did what he could, and, having manifested an intention of

changing his religion, he made a merit of a thing which seemed very suspicious. The Queen-mother, who was very pious and who thought she was doing a good deed (and indeed she could not do a better one than convert a soul to God), hearing speak of this resolve, spoke to the King in Pelisson's favour. His Majesty, whom the Cardinal, merely from policy and not from being a good Catholic, had impressed with the idea that, if he ever wanted to be absolute in his kingdom, he must work to reunite the Protestants with the Catholics, listened to the Queen-mother's entreaties and relaxed the severity of Pelisson's imprisonment, whilst awaiting the sentence on M. Fouquet, because it was not desirable to release him before it had been passed. Having been provided with ink and paper, which are great consolations for a clever man, he at once set to work to write the history of the King, giving the sheets to Besmaux, that he might show them to his Majesty as they were finished. Besmaux showed me some of them, so that I might give my opinion; but truly, if I must here explain myself, I think there are many people able to write a panegyric of his Majesty, but as to his history, perhaps only those selected by the King himself can do it.

Be this as it may, some time afterwards, a prisoner came into the Bastille, to wit Bussi Rabulin, who, being of opinion that writing the King's history had not injured Pelisson's chances of getting out, also attempted to do the same thing. He even begged Besmaux to tell his Majesty that, as in the days of Alexander one of his captains had written his history, it would be a good thing for one of his Majesty's officers

to take the same trouble about his. The King had personally as yet done nothing except reform the finances and commence to establish some discipline amongst the troops. As yet he had not gone through the campaign of 1667, in which he himself was seen lying at the bivouac at the head of his army, going to the trenches, exposing himself to cannon and musket shots, capturing valiantly defended towns, taking others by his presence alone and, in short, performing an infinity of other deeds which announced a hero of the first rank. Nor had those embassies from remote countries, asking his Majesty's protection, yet appeared, nor those superb palaces which he has since built and embellished, nor had the glorious campaign we have just been taking part in, the success of which will be believed with difficulty by posterity, yet taken place. Consequently, there was no need of the pen of one of his captains, since there was little for it to say. The King, who is a man of sound sense, made reply to Bussi Rabutin that, as he had as yet done nothing worthy to be chronicled, he would spare him such trouble, hoping in time to give material to those writing his history, so that they might speak more honourably of him than could now be done. Up to this he has kept his word none too badly; but I do not know if Bussi will keep his as well; for, in comparing himself to the biographer of Alexander the Great, he was undertaking no light task. Perhaps he was ignorant that his success, in writing a satire, was no sure sign he would succeed as well in history. It is far easier to please by writing scandals than praises. Scandal is never devoid of salt, unless very coarse, whereas every kind of praise is insipid, unless it is

really based upon deeds. But perhaps my remarks are useless, since it is likely that Bussi Rabutin only made this proposal in order to obtain his liberty. In any case, he was out in his reckoning, since his Majesty drew a great distinction between him and Pelisson. The one was merely the servant of a guilty master, whereas the other had written terrible things against the King, the Queen-mother, the first prince of the blood, and the principal persons of the Court. Accordingly, the King would not relent till the death of his mother, who, with the generosity of a great and Christian soul, begged her son to pardon this prisoner. His Majesty, though at first reluctant to do so, eventually allowed Bussi, who was, or pretended to be, ill, to go and be nursed in a house in Paris. Nevertheless, it was stipulated that he should return to the Bastille directly he was cured; but as it is rare, after such a pardon, for the King not to grant entire liberty, it was accorded him, when he had been restored to health.

Whilst the trial of M. Colbert was proceeding, the King, who continued on good terms with Charles II., began to think of getting back Dunkirk from him. His Britannic Majesty, who in times of adversity had indulged in amusement, continued the same course of conduct now he had re-ascended the throne. Indeed, it seemed as if he sometimes abandoned everything in consequence of his great love of pleasure. To speak the truth, it must be owned that he was very much inclined towards it; but it must also be admitted that his actions were occasionally prompted as much by policy as by personal likings. Knowing the disposition of his people, who were capable of a great deal, he desired to stop them from being turbulent, as far as he

could, by undertaking nothing which might lead to trouble. This suited our King very well, for he found himself powerful enough to lay down the law to all his neighbours, provided the English did not interfere. Nevertheless, as he did not see how he could ever be in safety, whilst Dunkirk was in the possession of England, Louis XIV. attempted to profit by his Britannic Majesty's love of pleasure. Charles II. had not as yet paid any of the debts he had contracted whilst an exile from his realm, which caused his creditors to secretly grumble, and, as they were the people who had the easiest access to him, D'Estrades received orders to win them over, so that they should abet the selling of Dunkirk. The town in question was of much political importance to England; but as private interests often get the better of the public good, the hope of being paid caused these men not only to return favourable answers to the ambassador, but to promote the success of his scheme. The Chancellor of England alone opposed the sale, either because he was owed nothing, and had, therefore, no part of this money to hope for, or because he, better than others, saw what harm it would do his nation.

The English no sooner heard speak of this affair than they kindled a kind of revolt in London. D'Estrades was two days without daring to leave his house, because, as he was its mainspring, he feared lest the populace, with whom there is no joking, might lack the respect due to his position.

This riot let the neighbouring powers know what was on foot and made them uneasy. Both the Spanish and Dutch raised every obstacle possible and both made offers of money for Dunkirk to his

Britannic Majesty, who declined them. Meanwhile, the English were soothed by the assurances of their Chancellor that the sale of this post was not dreamt of. Everything quieted down till such time as D'Estrades had contrived to win over the Chancellor by the promise of a large sum, and the latter, after making some show of resistance, gave way to the arguments of his King, and the sale of Dunkirk was at last resolved upon. The matter was so secretly arranged that the English people heard not a word about it. The amount[1] to be paid was agreed upon; it was larger than that offered to Cromwell for its restitution, but not too much, considering its importance and the money spent upon it since it had been in English hands. Our King meanwhile posted to this fortress to personally take possession of it, so fearful was he of missing such a stroke. Both companies of Musketeers, or at least a detachment of them, escorted the sum of money his Majesty had agreed to give, so that the sale might not fall through, as had been the case on another occasion, from its not being paid in time.

The whole thing turned out very happily for Louis XIV., whilst it nearly cost the life of the Chancellor of England. A great part of the City of London, not daring to openly revolt against its King on account of the good terms he was on with Louis XIV., rose against the Chancellor. He was obliged to escape to Whitehall and, the King of England protecting him, he had a kind of manifesto printed as a justification of his conduct, which set forth that the last Parliament had refused him the money necessary to pay his debts and keep up the

1 Four hundred thousand pounds.

garrison and fortifications of Dunkirk, which consequently being in a bad state of defence would infallibly have been taken by the King of France, with whom he had consequently been obliged to treat. The money he had obtained by its sale was a far better thing than letting it be captured by force; in addition, peace, which was essential to the prosperity of England, had been thereby secured.

These were the reasons which his Britannic Majesty gave for what had been done. They were none too good, but as there was now no remedy, the people had to be patient in its absence.

The King gave the governorship of Dunkirk to the Comte d'Estrades, who, it seemed, had a greater right to it than anyone else for two reasons, one being that he had already held it at the time it had been retaken from us during our civil wars, the other his having negotiated the treaty. The Comte d'Estrades kept his word with those of the English nobles to whom he had promised money, but Charles II., having doubtless heard from the Chancellor that they had all had their share (or because he himself needed money), gave them no part of the sum he had received. There was not too much for his mistresses, who had such a good appetite that there was not one of them who failed to gnaw him to the bone. Nevertheless, there was not so much need for the money to be spent in this way as in the other, but as there are princes who set their pleasure before anything else, there are many people to whom the King of England at that time owed money, who are to-day still his creditors to exactly the same amount. Indeed, it looks very much as if he would owe it them to-morrow

as well, since, when one takes so long to pay one's debts, one afterwards assumes an attitude of not taking too much trouble to pay them at all.

The success of his controversy about the precedence of Batteville had given great prestige to the King both at home and abroad, which was increased by his triumph at Rome, and the purchase of Dunkirk. This, together with the report that he was about to arraign those who had done violence to others during his minority, made all those, whose conscience was not quite clear, tremble. It was indeed reserved for his Majesty to protect the weak and the feeble against those who tried to oppress them. To this end he instituted a court which was called [1] "La Chambre des grands Jours," and as there were many persons of the first rank who were accused of having had a hand in these crimes, it was believed that the King was about to send his musketeers to aid this chambre, if need should arise. This, I think, was a trick planned by the ministers against this corps, because they perceived his Majesty continuing to be attached to it. I wrote to M. de Nevers on the subject, so that he might be beforehand with the King or, if they had already mooted the idea, might undo their handiwork. I would not have had recourse to him, if I had myself been able to act in the matter, but I still continued tied to M. Fouquet, so that I was not master of my time. M. de Nevers did not pay much attention to my petition, if I may give it that name, though his

1 Les grands Jours were announced for all the centre of the kingdom on the 31st August, 1665, but as this tribunal had been talked of for a long time previously, guilty people had time to ensure their safety.

interests were as much at stake as my own, if not more so, since he was Commander-in-Chief of the Company, and I merely ranked after him. Be this as it may, the Duc de Nevers having neglected the matter to the extent of not having said a single word about it, I myself spoke to the King some days later, when he had sent for me to enquire if it was true that M. Fouquet was ill on account of his not having been able to attend at the court of justice on its last meeting at the arsenal. In reply, his Majesty told me that he knew not who had reported such a thing to me, but he could assure me that whoever had done so must be very ill informed, for he had never dreamt of making a company of archers of his musketeers in order to provide the executioner with "game." He esteemed that company a little too much to thus make use of it every day, and I could rest easy about the matter. I thanked his Majesty and, having gone away very pleased, learnt, some days later, that this newly constituted court had left for Auvergne, where it was to hold its first sitting. Having stopped at Clermont, it filled with terror those who had abused their authority to the detriment of a number of poor and wretched people. The most prudent of the culprits fled before the storm and did none too badly, whilst some others, who trusted to the influence of their relatives and friends, found themselves caught. A few were executed, neither the judges nor the King being moved to pity. Not that his Majesty loved blood: never has a prince shed less, though he has been on the throne nearly thirty years, but he deemed the example necessary for the safety of those who might every day be oppressed as others had been. Besides, his ministers pointed out

that, if he suffered others than himself to be the masters in his kingdom, he must never reckon on having his power respected as that of a real monarch should be. The King was very solicitous on this point, as was reasonable; therefore, no more was needed to make him inexorable towards those who pleaded for these criminals.

Meanwhile, as people of rank have no greater enemies than those belonging to the dregs of the populace, they had much to suffer because, if they did the least thing, their own peasants had the boldness to threaten to go and denounce them. The ministers did not think of rectifying this, because their interests lay in humbling the nobility so as to make it yield to their wishes. Not that there was not some justice in punishing certain nobles who had played the "little tyrant" in their provinces, but as their crime did not make others guilty, but yet served to put all the nobility upon the same footing, it was easy to perceive that zeal for justice was not the sole motive, and that there was a good deal of policy about all this.

His Majesty, nevertheless, to tell the truth, already began to show that he liked justice as much as the King his father, who had obtained the name of "The Just." He listened to all who came to complain and satisfied them at once, unless it was out of his power. Besides this, his Majesty also did a very fine thing, first of all, from his own inclination and, secondly, by the advice of M. Colbert, who, to be just, though devoid of science and learning, delighted like his Majesty, in everything which could add brilliance to the reign or contribute to the grandeur of the state. Clever men and those who excelled in knowledge of

arts and sciences were made to come from foreign countries, so that everything might correspond with the splendour which the King's reign began to manifest. Neither trouble nor money were spared, and messengers were sent expressly to their houses to fetch them, so that love of country might not prevail over the advantages offered them.

The arts and sciences began, therefore, to be observed to flourish throughout France, and, as an evil mind looks at everything awry, there were many who, instead of admiring this as it doubtless deserved, criticised it just as if there was a desire to change the nature of the French. They declared that such things were very well for a republic, but not for a nation which had always relied upon its warlike strength and shown itself justified in doing so. The martial spirit of the French would degenerate, and they would share the fate of the Dutch, who had formerly been the most warlike people in all Europe, but who, since they had entirely devoted themselves to commerce, were much fitter for that than anything else. M. le Tellier and his son, the Marquis de Louvois, were not the last to give vent to these ideas, because, as one was Secretary of State for War and the other had the reversion of that post, they perceived that both of them would remain not only without occupation, but without importance and influence, if the King were to entirely yield to the arguments of M. Colbert. But they had no need to think of such a thing, for his Majesty had shown too much liking for the profession of arms, from his early youth up, to inspire any fear that he would abandon it, especially at a time when he was more in a state to occupy himself with military enterprise than ever.

His behaviour in regard to the incidents at London and Rome was a proof that he would not allow himself to be trodden down with impunity. Besides, the time he expended in making us go through our drill in spite of all his weighty occupations was a further proof that, even if his Majesty delighted in attracting to his kingdom every kind of clever and learned man, he would be none the less eager, when opportunity offered, to augment the glories of his reign by sieges and battles.

Meanwhile, it was left to Louis XIV. to accomplish a task which had always seemed most difficult to the Cardinal. This was to diminish the power of the Parlements, and especially that of the one of Paris, whose audacity had been only too marked during the civil wars. This the King gradually undertook and he did not succeed too ill. He had already begun by allotting commissioners to try M. Fouquet and instituting the "Chambre des Grands Jours," thus taking these two affairs out of the jurisdiction of the Parliament, which at another time would have tried to adjudicate upon them. His Majesty still continued the same line of action, so as to accustom it by small matters to follow only his own wishes in big ones.

Those who had retained that seditious spirit, which they had only too clearly paraded in troublous times, could not see these things without secretly murmuring. Not that they were novel. The appointing of commissioners had been in vogue since the ministry of Cardinal de Richelieu, but as it had not failed to cause complaints from the Parlements, it was not yet so thoroughly recognised as to pass for an established ordinance in the minds of these mutineers. Nevertheless, they dared say nothing, because the sovereign

power was firmly established and was supported by the blind obedience of all the nobles. Indeed, one might say that, ever since monarchy was monarchy, they had never taken so much pleasure in submitting to the will of their King as now, and each one vied with the other in leaving his province to come and show his zeal and respect at Court. It was no longer as in the Cardinal's time, when, for the smallest unpleasantness, a man would withdraw and show his teeth to the minister. His successors, though less powerful than he in honours, wealth, and authority, (since, properly speaking, they were but subaltern, whereas he was chief), made everything tremble beneath them. Everyone feared them, for they made use of his Majesty's name to avenge themselves, and had in this way already sent many people to the Bastille and to other royal prisons. Such rigorous measures made everyone respectful, and even the Parlement itself (with the exception of a Président des Enquêtes, who protested and received a "lettre de cachet" consigning him to Brives la Gaillarde) dared do nothing. Meanwhile, M. Colbert, to console the people for a number of things which were to its disadvantage, established many manufactories of all kinds, so as to cause the populace to earn their living and regain their good temper. They needed this, for there was a famine in France, the crops having totally failed.

Besides this, M. Colbert, to do, as the Italians say, "un pauco de bien un pauco de mal," had corn purchased in Barbary, so as to retain the friendship of the Parisians, which was rather beginning to slip away from him. This corn was put in the Louvre

and distributed at a low price, so as to relieve the people's misery, who, for the most part, were dying of hunger. For though it does not seem as if two or three sols more or less on a pound of bread matter much, it is, notwithstanding, on this that the happiness or misfortune of a state depends; for, as everyone requires it and cannot do without it, the rich man with many servants feels his poverty as well as the poor one, on account of the great number of persons whom he is obliged to nourish in order to support his position.

Some time after this famine, the Duc de Lorraine, who had got out of prison at the peace of the Pyrenees and had been re-established in his dominions by that treaty, being either bored at not disputing, as he had all his life done, or, as is more likely, being dissatisfied with the terms on which he had been re-established, came to Paris on the pretext of some difference which remained to be settled with his Majesty. After much negotiation, it was arranged that, in return for certain advantages granted by the King, the duc should temporarily yield up the fortress of Marsal to us. He did not, however, hasten to fulfil what had been stipulated, but delayed, while making all kinds of excuses. Finally, his Majesty, losing patience, sent the Comte de Guiche into Lorraine to assemble his army with Pradel, who was already in that part of the country. The Comte set out at once, and the rumour that Marsal was shortly to be besieged spread all over France, together with the report that the King in person would be present. This produced such a great number of volunteers that they alone would have been sufficient to have destroyed the

duc and all his country. He who had not been with the army for twelve or fifteen years, now gloried in going, on account of the esteem everyone felt for the rare qualities of his Majesty. It was understood that the days of Cardinal Mazarin were over, when only those who made themselves feared were rewarded! Accordingly, the Court was so large at Metz, that half the people who went there found no place where they could put up either for love or money.

In due course Marsal was besieged by Pradel and the Comte de Guiche, so that the Duc de Lorraine, perceiving there was no joking with his Majesty, had recourse to his clemency, for he saw that this was the sole way to stave off ruin. Matters were arranged and the fortress delivered into the King's hands, the governorship being bestowed upon a lieutenant of the Gardes du Corps named Faury. His Majesty then returned to Metz, which place the duc having visited to pay his respects, he left the next day to return to Paris.

This journey of the King's, which lasted but three weeks, completed the ruin of the nobility, which had found itself obliged to spend a thousand times more since the peace than during the war. There was no year in which a dozen balls were not given at the Court. Besides this, there were many ballets, and as the King danced in them, and everybody liked to dance with him, so as the better to pay him court, there was a contest who should present the most magnificent appearance. There was a good deal of policy, as I have already said, in all these amusements: besides which, the King had a mistress for whom he was very pleased to arrange them. He had fallen in love with

her at the house of Madame, whose maid of honour she was.

Her name was Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and she was a thousand times more charming, though of moderate beauty, than the most beautiful person in the world. The King concealed his love for some time, because, being a thoroughly honourable man, he had a great respect for the Queen, whom he did not wish to pain. Meanwhile, as he frequently went to visit Madame, his brother's wife, who was sister of the King of England and a perfectly charming princess both in mind and beauty, the latter thought she had a great share in promoting his visits. Nothing but a present of a pearl necklace and diamond earrings, which the King gave his mistress disillusioned her. Madame de Choisi, who had returned from exile, and had taken pleasure in instructing this amiable person as to the King's feelings towards her and the way she should comport herself in her new position, had prepared her to receive it.

The King, indeed, did not lack people ready to play this part. The Comte de St. Agnan, "premier gentilhomme de la chambre," and the Marquise de Montausier showed themselves the most eager. They were rewarded for this more than for any other services, so that they soon attained the highest dignities. Except for their conscience, they were much wiser to act thus than save other people who approved his Majesty's choice.

La Comtesse de ——,[1] whom the King had loved, was in despair at his preferring a girl whose worth appeared to her inferior to her own. Nevertheless,

1 The Comtesse de Soissons-Olympe Mancini.

not everyone was of this opinion. The comtesse was a coquette, which Mademoiselle de la Vallière was not. It is true she had yielded to his Majesty's desires, which proved she was no vestal, but, besides its being a very difficult thing to resist a great King of charming appearance and manner, it is a certainty that she loved him before he loved her. What she had done was then prompted by a fine passion without there being any coquetry in it, whereas the comtesse, after having been loved by the King, had yielded to the advances of a number of other people, who could not be compared to him. She was indeed the more in fault, for she possessed a husband who was an honourable man and madly adored her. Yet she was amiable enough except ıor the coquetry, which is not always a defect, according to certain people. These think that it is more exciting than a complete beauty, which in one sense is true, though not in the one to be desired, if contentment is any object. A piquante beauty, to my mind, is a lively beauty and one who is guided by duty or, at most, neglects it only for one lover. That is to say, she has but a single lover in addition to her husband; but if she has a greater number, I leave such delights to other people, not personally highly esteeming pleasures of this sort!

Be this as it may, the comtesse, observing only with regret that this girl occupied a position which she would much have liked to fill, prompted her lover to inform the Queen of what was going on contrary to her liking, for she loved the King with an unbounded passion, so much so that never had wife loved her husband as she did hers. It was not, however, so easy as the comtesse thought, to inform the Queen of such

a thing as this without anyone noticing it. When her Majesty had come to France, she did not know one word of French, and since then she had not as yet learnt very much, so that, when one wanted to say anything to her, one always had to begin over again three or four times before she could understand it. Signs, indeed, had often to be used to make her understand, so that in such a pass, that good man Guitaut was more useful than anyone else, because he alone could make her comprehend a thing of this sort in other ways than by words, unless modesty was to be outraged.

The lover of the comtesse would certainly have resorted to a like stratagem, to let the young Queen know what his mistress wanted him to tell her, if he had been of the same character as Guitaut. Besides, the times had changed since the King's minority, when everything had seemed permissible, whereas now, the least lack of respect was rightly regarded as neither more nor less than a great crime. The comtesse agreed with her lover, when he impressed this upon her, and, changing her plan, resolved to have the Queen written to. The Comte de Guiche, who was of this cabal, had no sooner returned from Lorraine than he offered himself, in order to please the comtesse, whom (it is thought) he loved. The plot was not, however, carried out too quickly, on account of some mistake which occurred; but as the jealousy of the comtesse gave her no rest, there was no kind of mortification which she did not think of, to hurt Mademoiselle de la Vallière: this, indeed, was much the same thing as attacking the King, and would have at once been punished, had it not been that his Majesty forgave it for the sake of the

originator, knowing that jealousy alone instigated her, and thinking her sufficiently punished by her own bad behaviour.

About this time the Spaniards complained that the Portuguese were being assisted, in spite of the promises made at the Peace of the Pyrenees, which declared that they should be abandoned. This, as a matter of fact, was true, but, as we were only following their own example, we contented ourselves with making fine speeches, whilst resolving not to alter our conduct. To save appearances, edicts were issued, threatening those who should go to assist Portugal, while secretly such persons were furnished with ships and money for the journey. The ministers rather objected to this war, which cost his Majesty large sums. In particular, M. Colbert strongly disapproved of it. No sooner had the peace been made than the King quietly had an army corps despatched to Portugal, commanded by the Maréchal de Schomberg. These troops had apparently been cashiered, so that the expedition might appear to have set out without the King's orders, and the fact of the maréchal, being a foreigner, gave more weight to this, especially as he did not seem to be any longer attached to the Court.

M. de Turenne had mentioned him to the King as the man for this enterprise, for, besides being a foreigner, he was as good a general as could be desired. The Portuguese were not too pleased when they knew that it was a Huguenot who was being sent, and the Portuguese Court made difficulties about his reception, especially about allowing him the free exercise of his religion, since it was afraid of incurring the displeasure of the Inquisition—a tribunal which

is the more dangerous, as it never fails to cover all its actions with the veil of religion! Some means for settling this had to be found, before the maréchal could set foot in the country. Meanwhile, the Spaniards having crossed the frontier with the intention of subduing the rebels, for so they called the Portuguese, the latter were obliged to put up with the maréchal, just as if he had been a Roman Catholic. The Inquisition also gave way, and allowed him to have a chaplain, not only in his house, but even when with the army. He did the Portuguese great service, and defended them so well that, instead of the Spaniards beating them everywhere, as they expected, they themselves were very often defeated.

This was the cause of the Spanish complaints, which obtained but a poor hearing from his Majesty. Spain then began plotting against him in Europe, its principal efforts being made in England, because the Spanish were persuaded that it was from that quarter especially that the King might receive some rebuff. But, besides it being a difficult thing to make his Britannic Majesty, who wished to live at peace with his neighbours, consent to this, England itself was beginning to split up into parties, so that its King was sufficiently occupied in soothing his own differences, without trying to excite them in another country. This split was caused by the diverse religions which prevail in that country. It is an evil which for a long time past has devoured it and looks very much as if it would continue to do so in the future. Those called Puritans by the English, whose party is so considerable that they show a bold front to the Episcopalians, which is the dominant religion of the country, insisted that certain things should be

granted them. They flattered themselves that the King of England secretly supported them, not that he approved of their religion, but because they suspected him of belonging no more to the religion of their opponents than to their own. Their reason was, that Charles II. had just married a Catholic princess, from which they inferred that he was more inclined to belong to that religion than to have none at all, and consequently would be eager to establish a certain equality, so that, sowing dissensions amongst the two parties, he might one day make the religion he professed triumph over all the others. The Shakers and some other fanatics, who form another religious body distinct from the three mentioned, hereupon availed themselves of the opportunity to put forward the evil schemes which they nurtured against the present government: but the King, having discovered their conspiracy, stopped its having any result by punishing those who were the most guilty. This ruined the schemes of other rebels, Charles II. mingling so much political aptitude with his pleasures that, at the time when he was believed to be deeply plunged in delights, he was really devoting most serious attention to the affairs of the kingdom.

Whilst the King of Spain devoted himself in this way to stirring up enemies against his Majesty, the Emperor, who saw himself threatened by the Turks, sent the Comte de Strozzi to France to ask for help against the common enemy of Christendom. His Majesty promised to send a force of six thousand men and, much to everyone's astonishment, chose M. de Coligny as its commander, in order to mortify M. le Prince, who had recently quarrelled with that officer,

though Coligny had been one of his most zealous supporters during his insurrection. The King's policy was, always to remind this prince of his past errors. Two Maréchaux de Camp were allotted to Coligny, La Feuillade and Poowis, the one as big a beggar as the other, though the latter was the best manager, having been taught by want, whereas La Feuillade, after having been rich several times, had used his wealth so ill that he had become as poor as Job. Consequently, he had to resort to Prudhomme, who tried to furnish him with the funds to set out with. A number of volunteers joined these troops, of which two-thirds were infantry and the rest cavalry. The Comte de Saux, eldest son of the Duc de Lesdiguiers, and the Marquis de Ragni, his younger brother, were amongst them. This little army entered Germany at the beginning of April[1] and reached Hungary the end of the next month, where it joined the Emperor's army under the Comte de Montecuculli, which had already sustained a defeat. After severe fighting, in which our troops showed great gallantry and drove the infidels over the Raab, in which river many of them were drowned, the Emperor saw fit to make peace with the Turks, though he might, after such a victory, have secured further great advantages. The Germans declare that he had detected secret interviews, which took place at night between certain Hungarian nobles and the Comte de Coligny, but personally I very much doubt this. In any case, the French returned very discontented, and were allowed to want for everything on the journey back. Coligny, though a brave man, gained no great renown from this battle, in which he

[1] 664.

had not taken part owing to the gout which tormented him. La Feuillade profited by the occasion and began the fight without him, nor did he lose any time in letting the King know what had happened, though he did not mention Poowis, who had done as well as anyone else. By his behaviour in Hungary, La Feuillade obtained the King's forgiveness for a folly he had committed at Madrid and was accorded a good reception. A short time afterwards, his Majesty furnished him with the means of paying Prudhomme, by giving him the sole right of having the civil and criminal code printed, which he had just promulgated. La Feuillade sold it to the booksellers for fifty thousand crowns. Besides this, he received other gifts; but he was a regular sieve and had he had the whole realm at his command, he would yet never have been in easy circumstances.

Meanwhile, the Comtesse still continued disconsolate at the King's preference for Mademoiselle de la Vallière, whom he still loved as much as ever. After much persuasion,[1] the Comte de Guiche was weak or rather foolish enough to write to the Queen as the Comtesse desired. A terrible disturbance ensued. Her Majesty showed the letter to the Queen-mother and complained of her having concealed such a thing, for as yet she did not know of this intrigue, though slightly suspicious on account of the King, who had been much in love with her in the early days of their marriage, not manifesting as much ardour as he had

1 The Comte de Vardes was the intermediary who arranged that a letter concocted by the Comte de Guiche and himself should be given, as if coming from Spain, to the Signora Molina, head waiting-maid to the Queen.

then done. The Queen-mother very easily cleared herself, saying that she had concealed this liaison in order to save her pain, and declaring that she bore the senders of the letter a great grudge, for they must have acted from malevolence, for which reason she felt certain the King would inflict an exemplary punishment upon them, if ever they could be discovered. At the same time, she did her best to persuade the Queen to conceal her grief from everyone, but this her Majesty would not promise to do. Indeed, it was impossible for her to conceal her jealousy from the King and also what had aroused it. His Majesty, like the honourable man he is, consoled her to the best of his power, and bade her give him the letter, so that he might discover the sender, whom he suspected to be some person of rank.

Mayhap the King might have discovered the real author of the letter, had he not thought him too prudent and contented to make such a great mistake. Just before this, the Comte de Guiche had received the reversion of the post of colonel of the Guards; besides this, he was a general and further a lieutenant-general on the active list, which is no small thing in time of peace, when everyone cannot be employed. All this should have been enough to satisfy a young man not yet thirty years of age, for he was nearing the baton of a Maréchal de France, which others deem themselves only too lucky to obtain, when they have grown old in harness. His Majesty, therefore, putting aside any suspicion he might have had on account of the letter being in good Spanish, which the Comte de Guiche alone at Court spoke to perfection, decided to show it to M. Colbert. The latter, together with M. le Tellier

and the Marquis de Louvois, who were afterwards shown this note, were not able to divine who the writer could be, for the Comte de Guiche had thoroughly disguised his handwriting. The King had shown this missive to M. Colbert before anyone else, because he was much attached to his mistress. Being a sly fox, on perceiving the place she was taking, he had at once offered his aid and money, which Mademoiselle de la Vallière had gratefully accepted. The King continued to make investigations and, by the advice of the Marquis de Louvois who was every day getting a stronger hold on his mind, sought to discover who were the real friends of his mistress as opposed to the false ones. It was not necessary to be a magician to find this out, for truth easily makes itself known. Accordingly, after a searching enquiry, suspicion fell upon the comtesse and her lover. The latter held an important post in the King's household, no less a one than the captaincy of the Gardes du Corps—in short, it was De Wardes, captain of the Cent Suisses, who had listened more to the voice of his mistress than to that of duty. The Marquis de Louvois made this discovery, and his suspicions were based upon the fact that the comtesse never saw Mademoiselle de la Vallière without imitating some of her defects.[1] At first, the King would not believe this, as he knew that the young minister was not on any too good terms with the comtesse; besides, he wished to spare the feelings of her relatives, who were very highly placed at Court. He desired that a further investigation should be made, so that, when

1 Louise de la Vallière was, as is well known, slightly lame.

punishment was doled out, everyone might have cause to praise his patience rather than censure his severity.

Whilst all this was going on, M. Fouquet, after having been subjected to innumerable questionings, was at length sentenced and condemned to perpetual banishment. M. Colbert was very much surprised at this sentence, which he did not expect. The day before it was passed, Hofman had again confirmed what he had before said about the intention of the judges. He really thought he was speaking the truth, for they were all inclined to condemn him to death. There were, indeed, sufficient grounds for this, but M. Fouquet defended himself well, and M. d'Ormesson, Maitre des Requêtes, who was one of his judges, undertook to justify him and made all the others alter the sentence they had decided upon. Nevertheless, as it was impossible to thoroughly clear him, they had still condemned him to the sentence I have just mentioned.

Such a thing was a great mortification for M. Colbert, but, as it was done and there was no remedy, he pointed out to the King that he should change the sentence into perpetual imprisonment, since it would not be safe to allow the prisoner to go into foreign countries, by reason of his knowledge of all the affairs of the State, which he might utilise for purposes of revenge. The King agreed with this, and the Surintendant, instead of being liberated as he expected, was as much a prisoner as ever. Nevertheless, he was not kept at the Bastille, and, having been conveyed to the Château de Moret, which is only two leagues from Fontainebleau, he was soon afterwards taken to Pignerol, where he still is to-day. He was rather

upset when he heard his fate. Mlle. du Plessis Bellier left Montbrison, where she had remained since his detention. Montbron, who had been her warder, returned to Paris and was made sub-lieutenant of the 2nd company of Musketeers in the place of Casaux, who was conceited enough, common man as he was, not to consent to obey the brother of M. Colbert, to whom the King had given this company after the death of Marsac. This is the man who is to-day called Colbert de Maulevrier, a brave man who would have no need of his brother's influence, if valour alone ensured advancement. Nevertheless, he is insupportably vain, which is the cause of his having had a quarrel at Court and not having long retained his post. But, as one man's loss is another man's gain, this has made the fortune of Montbron, who, it is true, is a gentleman, but who, fifteen or sixteen years ago, did not appear to be on the high road to being what he is to-day.

I may mention that the sentencing of M. Fouquet gave me back my liberty, for my position had been much that of a prisoner. M. Colbert, in spite of this, had an idea of prolonging my captivity by sending me to Pignerol with the prisoner, but, getting wind of this, I spoke to him and did not scruple to say that, unless his Majesty's interests absolutely required it, I would beg him to excuse me from passing my life as a gaoler. There were a thousand people who would think themselves fortunate in such a position, Besmaux for instance, who was so pleased with it, that I doubted if he would exchange it for the baton of a Maréchal de France. This liking arose no doubt from its being a profitable occupation, and, to tell

the truth, I myself had not done badly at it; but, not being by nature grasping, I would prefer to have the honour of serving the King, as before, in the Guards as a plain soldier to being the first gaoler in France. M. Colbert, being displeased at my reply, bade me speak to the King, which I at once did in exactly the same strain.

The King began to laugh at what I said, for I spoke very fervently, and like a man who had suffered no less than the prisoner I had been guarding. Consequently, as he liked people who did not beat about the bush, provided all respect was shown him, his Majesty replied that it was easy to discover that I did not care for hoarding money, and that he liked me the better for it. Meanwhile, I must tell him if he could trust St. Mars with the guarding of my prisoner. I had already reported excellently of him, but now I must give my sincere opinion. I had nothing but good to say of this officer: so confirming all I had already reported of him, the duty of conducting M. Fouquet to Pignerol and the supervision of him there was given him. There were many who looked upon the fate of M. Fouquet as a thousand times worse than death itself. They also deemed it a just punishment of Heaven for all the debaucheries he had indulged in whilst fortune had been favourable.

He had debauched a number of girls of rank with his money, and, on his arrest, a diary had been discovered, in which they were registered, one after the other, with their names and surnames, as being persons whose favours he had enjoyed. Nor had he forgotten to put what they had cost him, so that, either because this diary was a true one, as was very likely, or because he

had only concocted it in order to make those who should some day read it believe that he was a lucky man, these girls were, at any rate, dishonoured without trouble being taken to discover the truth. One of the Queen's maids of honour was even banished—so clearly was her name written in red letters in this book.

The King's love for Mlle. de la Vallière did not prevent him from being like many other people, who sometimes leave a good meal at home to have a bad one elsewhere! It is human frailty which makes us act thus, and it is enough to be a man to often behave in such a way. For a minute he adored a maid of honour of the Queen, his wife and everyone noticing it, the Duchesse de Navailles attempted to prevent its coming to anything and adopted means to this end. This very much displeased his Majesty; indeed, as he already suspected her of having given indiscreet advice to the Queen in the matter of the letter which told of his intrigue with Mlle. de la Vallière, he banished her from his household. Her husband shared her fate, and both were ordered to give up their posts, which were very important ones.

The fall of these two persons was a sure presage that the writers of the letter I have a moment ago spoken of would fare no better, if indeed they got off as cheaply. Nevertheless, as if blind enough not to foresee the storm which threatened, they threw verses into the King's room, in which his mistress was further lampooned. Besides her lameness, they reproached her with being thin to the last degree. This was true; she had been thin even when she had come to Court, so that one might say this was an old defect.

Nevertheless, an accident had increased it, as she had already had two children by the King, who might well pass as love children, since they were both more beautiful the one than the other, but since this she had looked almost like someone in a consumption.

A little before M. Fouquet had been sentenced, M. Colbert, who had instituted companies to trade all over the world after the example of our neighbours, undertook to conquer a fortress in Barbary, so as to protect our vessels passing near. We had to reckon with two kinds of enemies: the Moors, who were avowed foes, and the Spaniards, who, owning Ceuta and other towns on the coast, did not desire our presence in the vicinity, and were secretly hostile to us. The Duc de Beaufort, who was Admiral of France in his father's place, though not too capable a man, was charged with this expedition. Had he realised his incapacity all would have been well; but, being puffed up because he was the King's uncle and commander of his naval forces, he began to quarrel with Gadagne, who had been sent with him to teach him what he did not know. Gadagne let him go his own way and, after much ill success, Gigeri, the fortress which had been seized, was abandoned three months after its capture, the expedition being obliged to return to France. As a crowning misfortune, some of the ships which were not worth much sprang leaks whilst on their return, and the soldiers on board were drowned with all the crews.

The enemies of M. Colbert were not over disconsolate at this catastrophe, nor at the result of the expedition, because, though it was a heavy loss to the State, they had hopes that it would make its author lose

the favour of his Majesty. His foes hastened to spread reports of the errors which had been committed, hoping that the responsibility might be put upon M. Colbert. The King would doubtless have tried to ignore these accusations, but care was taken to let him know of them by means of notes which were thrown into his room at his "petit coucher,[1]" so that his Majesty must notice them the next day, or, at any rate, his chief valet, who slept there, must find them. This was some great noble's work, because everybody had not the entry; however, it did not have the expected result. His Majesty, who was just and judicious, contented himself with lamenting over those who had perished in the shipwreck, without being angry with his minister. He did not deem that it had been his fault and so, continuing to treat him as well as ever, he covered his enemies with confusion.

The King had given Bussi Rabutin a very good answer, when he had told him, on the occasion of his wanting to write his history, that he had not as yet done anything worth chronicling, but that he would try and give people who had such an intention something to occupy themselves with. Never had prince finer ideas, and his only solicitude was to distinguish himself by the great plans which he at once proceeded to carry out, so that it was no fault of his, if his glory was not elevated to the highest point to which a great king can aspire.

Up to this time he had not succeeded too badly. He had, at the death of Cardinal Mazarin (for I only reckon

1 *Petit coucher:* The time when the King retired to his inner apartment and got into bed. At this time, only privileged nobles were present.

his real reign from that day), ascended a throne impaired by debts,—a throne, I repeat, the most ancient and the finest in all Europe, it is true, but so tarnished by the weakness of this minister, by the encroachments of the Parlements, and by the disobedience of the nobles, that it might be truthfully said that Louis XIV. had found it with many masters instead of with one. No discipline prevailed amongst the troops nor order in the finances, two things which deal a mortal blow at a State. Nevertheless, no sooner had the King appeared, than he had dispersed all these clouds, like the sun, whose image he had adopted, and set everything in order. But all this being too light a task for him and more the business of a pacific than a conquering prince, such as he wished to become, he was not sorry to perceive his neighbours quarrelling amongst themselves, because, while thus employed, they would be in no condition to upset his great schemes.

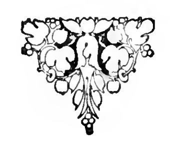
England he viewed with suspicion in consequence of the aversion he knew it to entertain for the French nation. Besides, his Majesty disliked its naval forces being more powerful than his own. He likewise looked on the Netherlands with no less suspicion, because he knew they were afraid of his prosperity, and had heard that the Dutch had rejoiced at the French reverses at Gigeri. Indeed, that people had viewed the establishment of an Indian Company after their model very jealously. This being so, it is said that the King secretly fomented some grievance which Charles II. had against them, so as to hamper their commerce. It is also said that he did the same thing with regard to Bernard Van Galen, Bishop of Munster, who was more of a general than a prelate, since he carried both

the mitre and the sword, as do all the ecclesiastical princes of Germany; indeed, he understood drawing up an army in battle array much better than preaching a sermon. Never had man been less fit for the Church and more fit to wear a sword than he!

Encouraged either by the attitude of England or really assured of the assistance of France, this bishop now no longer hesitated to carry out a scheme he had long contemplated, and declared war on Holland. Louis XIV. then offered to mediate, sending the Duc de Verneuil with M. Courtin, for the King of that country had also commenced hostilities against the Dutch. He complained of their conduct in India, and though he accepted the offers of mediation, the English fleet continued to be materially strengthened, which mayhap did not displease our ambassadors, for our interests lay in all parties exhausting themselves. Meanwhile, Holland sent to ask his Majesty for assistance, which, indeed, they were in need of, for the Bishop of Munster was everywhere defeating them. Though the King acceded to this request, he did not do so till they had been somewhat humiliated by their losses.

Before all this had happened, the King had discovered the authors of the letter sent to the Queen, of which I have before spoken. He had discovered that all this had resulted from the jealousy of the Comtesse . . . . . and that the suspicions of the Marquis de Louvois had been well founded. She was at once exiled with her husband to one of their properties not very far from Paris. Wardes was thrown into the Bastille, and the Comte de Guiche, with whom the King was more angry than with anyone else (because

he had not acted from his own feelings, but had been persuaded by his friends) was banished from the kingdom, to which he was only allowed to return five or six years after, and then on very severe conditions. Meanwhile, his father, the Maréchal de Grammont, who was in despair, made his son go to Holland as a volunteer in the army, which his Majesty declared he would send there. It was to consist of six thousand men, among whom a detachment of the King's household was to be included. I asked to be allowed to go, because I had played the gaoler long enough at the Bastille, but M. Colbert Maulevrier made the same request, and as I could not compete with the brother of a minister, on hearing of his claims I at once abandoned my own.





VIII

M. COLBERT MAULEVRIER had no sooner assumed command of the second company of musketeers than the whole of France, in order to please his brother rather than him, tried to put her sons into his company. It was composed only of marquises and comtes, whereas the one I had the honour of commanding was made up, so to speak, only of old chamois[1] compared to it. The nobles, who had at first joined it to pay court to the King, had by degrees retired, and so, if any people of rank yet remained, they were not of the first houses in the realm, as, at its inauguration, but only of those termed good families. M. de Maulevrier's eagerness to get the better of me and rise in his Majesty's estimation on my ruin had made him invent a thousand kinds of expenses, which he thought neither I nor my musketeers could support. I say *my* musketeers, though I am well aware that I ought not to speak thus, since they were the King's musketeers and not mine; but if I do so, it is but because such language appears more natural though not so correct. Do not then reprove me, though I am wrong, since,

1 An allusion to the leather which was gradually taking the place of armour in the French army.

when a person himself owns his fault and does not fail to accuse himself of it, he is not doing any great harm.

I had the luck, in order to maintain the struggle, to come across a rich mistress, who liked me well enough to share her fortune with me. I had just become friends with one whom I must say something about before continuing. Like other people, I had married,[1] because it seems to me, if it is a folly, as indeed I deem marriage to be, and a very great one too, it is at least a folly which one may be allowed to commit once. I had married a very jealous woman, who worried me to such a pitch that, if I went anywhere, she at once set a thousand spies at my heels. This was great waste of time, and I was not the man to put up with the lectures, which she tried to give me every time that I went to any place which did not please her. We often squabbled about this, and I would freely speak my mind. She would not consent to receive the reprimands I gave her, and relations became more and more strained, so that, having one day asked her if there was more harm in my seeing Madame So-and-so than in her seeing M. de ——, she seized the opportunity to retire into a convent. As

1 D'Artagnan was married in the Chapel of the Louvre, March 5th, 1659, to Charlotte Anne de Chanlecy, Baronne de St. Croix, a widow of considerable wealth. The wedding was a splendid affair, the King and entire Court being present. D'Artagnan was attended by the Maréchal Duc de Grammont and Francois de Besmaux, whom he so frequently mentions. On this occasion the young King is said to have placed the Cross of St. Louis upon the famous Captain of Musketeers' breast. It is curious that there is no earlier mention of D'Artagnan's marriage in the Memoirs.

everyone, even her friends, laughed at her jealousy, and there was not one of them who did not remonstrate with her, she was anxious to make out that I was the jealous person, not she. Accordingly, she spread about the reproach I had levelled at her, declaring that, in order no longer to expose herself either to my bad temper, or to hearing such things said, she preferred to at once renounce the world rather than lead such a miserable existence.

Everyone formed a correct opinion about this, except those people who, not being friends of mine, were well pleased at such a false version becoming bruited about, so that it might do me harm. I was grieved at this escapade, not that I had any fears of my reputation suffering, but because it is always disagreeable for such a thing to happen between an honourable man and one so closely related to him. Nevertheless, my wife was very proud of what she had done, and gave out everywhere that she could not better have convinced me of my error than by acting in such a way. A woman who had had an intrigue would not have gone like this and shut herself up in a convent. Her own free will alone had taken her there, and would likewise be all that would keep her in it, whilst I was alive.

These speeches at once reached my ears, and, as I was more judicious than she and feared lest, by wishing to justify herself, she might make people believe what was not true, I had her told to return, because the shortest follies are the best. I knew the world too well not to be aware that, should she continue in the same strain, people's love for slandering their neighbour would cause this dream to be taken for truth. But to be a woman and to be reasonable is not always the same

thing, and so she rejected my proposal as if I had done her a great wrong. I deplored her blindness, which was all it was in my power to do, since she would not listen to reason. Accordingly, I left her in her convent, since she liked it so much. Nevertheless, I do not know if such was the case; but, whether it was or not, I am very sure she is there still, and that I have taken no more trouble to make her come out of it. For her part, she has shown herself full of pride, so that, not wishing to have me begged to take her back, she has remained where she is and I in my own house. Most marriages in this world turn out like this, because it frequently happens, when one marries, as it happened to me, that one consults one's own interests or passion more than the character of the person to whom one is about to bind oneself for the lifetime of both.

To return, however, to my mistress, with reference to whom what I have just mentioned had to be told before proceeding. Some days after this escapade of my wife's, that is to say, five or six weeks later, when it was known that we were not to become reconciled, I received a note in an unknown hand, but in one which I well knew from the writing was a lady's, even if the bearer had not mentioned the name of Madame la Marquise de Virteville as the lady who had begged him to give it to me. This name was as unknown to me as the handwriting, but as the bearer was a young gentleman of good appearance and address, I would not say that I did not know whom it came from, till such time as I should have seen the contents of the missive. I therefore opened it at once, and found a declaration of love which did not leave me indifferent.

It contained things which I shall always remember so clearly that, if I do not recollect the very words themselves, I shall very nearly do so. It set forth, I say, that for an endless time the writer had felt esteem for me, for everything which was extremely wearisome was called "endless." The cause of this annoyance was my having a wife, and the fact that the writer had enough delicacy not to desire a divided heart. However, now that she knew my wife was separated from me, and I from her, she was ready to let me know her feelings, and if I would, the next day at two in the morning, be in the "Rue des deux écus" at the door of the Hôtel de Soissons, I should see a hired carriage, which would stop the other side of the street, ten paces further on. I was to get into it, and would there find the lady who was writing the present letter. I was not to think badly of the cavalier who brought it to me, whom the writer would frankly tell me she had never seen before giving him this note, but, in spite of that, she had thought she could safety entrust it to him. I must know that, having gone to the Comédie with one of her friends, and all the boxes except two places being taken, she had been told to enter one in which were two young gentlemen. The bearer of the note was one of these two, he and his friend having very politely given up the two best places. She had overheard him say that he would have very much liked to have known me, so as to enter the 1st company of musketeers. She had seized the opportunity and told him that, in return for his politeness, she would give him a letter of introduction to me, and had written the note I would now be reading. Meanwhile, it lay only with me to oblige this cavalier, who, as it appeared, would do his

comrades much more honour than they would do him.

The lady's recommendation pleased me so much, that I at once told this gentleman that I should be delighted to oblige him. Meanwhile, I asked him who he was and whence he came, so that when I presented him to the King, I might let his Majesty know, and not propose a recruit unworthy of this company which he so especially honoured with his esteem. He replied that he was the son of a conseiller of Brittany and that his father had a good twenty-four thousand livres a year. This very much pleased me, because I wanted men like him to compete with M. de Maulevrier, that is to say, to keep the company I had the honour to command upon the same footing as his. Meanwhile, as if ignorant of his having never seen the pretended Marquise de Virteville, I told him, so as to learn something about her, that he could have found no greater friend of mine than that lady, and that I would like to be his patron whilst he remained in the company. He innocently replied that I must not flatter him on having her acquaintance, since he had never seen her before they had met at the Comédie. At the same time, he repeated the same story as she had herself written, adding that he had never seen such a fine woman nor such a clever one, which made me so amorous that the night seemed as long as a thousand years. So eager was I to find myself at the meeting place she had appointed! The gentleman then asked me for the lady's address, so that he might go and thank her for the favour she had done him, not having dared to ask it himself nor enquire of her lackeys, as she had not allowed him to conduct her to her carriage, on the pretext that

she had something to say to the actresses. In answer to this, I replied that he could not go and see her, because she had a jealous husband, who was frightened of everything, even his own shadow. This was the usual fate of beautiful women such as she, and, though she had to suffer a good deal, she was less to be pitied than others, because she bore it with angelic patience. I alone was allowed the privilege of seeing her, because I was a very old friend of her husband's, who, for some reason I could not make out, regarded me with no more suspicion than if in any case there was no risk! This amused me a good deal—just as if I had not got eyes like anyone else.

I easily concocted this story, so that he might not press me further to give him the lady's address, which I knew no more than he did. Meanwhile, to console him for my refusal, I promised to tell the lady how grateful he was for her goodness, and that it was no fault of his that he had not at once thanked her. Two days later, I presented him to the King, and, his Majesty accepting him, he became a musketeer, as he desired, but he did not remain long in the company. As he was rich and loved pleasure, home sickness very soon seized him, so that he asked me to let him go. I was delighted, because from time to time he manifested a great desire to see the pretended Marquise de Virteville. This in no way suited me, for, had he succeeded in seeing her, he would at once have discovered that such was not her real name, and might thus have conceived suspicions which would have troubled her peace as well as my own. He might even have suspected me of being in love with her, which I was unwilling should happen, for she could

not have been more esteemed than she was by me, and such a thing must infallibly have harmed her.

I had gone to the place she had appointed, as may easily be imagined without my swearing it. She had one of her friends with her, which much surprised me; for, after her note, I had reason to hope, as it seemed to me, that she was as eager for a solitary meeting as myself. She wore a mask, as did also her friend, and both of them receiving me without unmasking, I had no sooner opened the door of the carriage than I thought I had made a mistake, since I found a lady in such a get-up, accompanied by a third party, which I did not expect. Accordingly, having tried to withdraw after muttering trifling words about my mistake, one of the ladies told me that it was indeed true I was mistaken, but in quite another way to the one I thought. I must enter the carriage with them and she would let me know where my real error lay.

If I had been a little upset at seeing two ladies instead of one, I was much more so at this speech, which I in no way expected, and could not help blushing. Meanwhile, I got into the carriage, and the lady who had before spoken to me enquired whether, if I were to speak the truth, I would not admit that I had come with the idea of a certain conquest, and of one which would not even cost me a sigh. In this I was much more mistaken than in thinking that she was not the writer of the letter, which indeed she was, nor did she yet repent of it, though it had been rather bold and must surely have made me think ill of her. However, she intended to so thoroughly make up for it by her future behaviour towards me, that I should be obliged to tell myself

that there was nothing so deceptive as appearances. She had owned her esteem for me in the note and would do so again now, even before her friend, but she would, at the same time, have me know that this esteem would never make her do anything unworthy of a person of rank, such as she was, and still less so, of a virtuous person as she professed to be. If I was capable of a fine passion, she would offer me a heart, which I might, perhaps, value when I should know it; but if I was incapable of such an affection, it was useless for us to make each other's acquaintance.

I deemed this speech so extraordinary, after the note I had received, that, had I been a great novel reader, I should at once have believed myself one of those heroes to whom even more extraordinary adventures than this are perpetually happening. However, as I had never indulged in such reading, and was, besides, more material than these heroes are made out to be, the lady's words did not particularly please me. I had expected, as she had very rightly said, only to have to stoop in order to pluck. At any rate, her note had prepared me for such a thing, and, besides, I was naturally impetuous. Her present proposal of an ideal affection was not at all to my taste; but yet, as I was sufficiently experienced to know that the women who make themselves out to be the most virtuous are often the greatest coquettes, I put aside the first impression her words had made upon me, telling myself that, after what she had done, she could not keep up her courage; so, feigning to be the man she wanted, and declaring that she would always find me ready to do all she wished, I was about to ask her to remove her mask, when she anticipated my request. She herself took it

off and told me, whilst doing so, that on these conditions she was quite ready to make herself known to me, so that I might decide, on seeing her, if she deserved that anything should be done for her sake.

She was right to speak thus, and even to think that there was so much pleasure in obedience that, however difficult her commands might be, they would not fail to be obeyed with all one's heart. She was assuredly one of the most beautiful people in the world, and one whose charm besides equalled her beauty. Accordingly, I became, as it were, enchanted at seeing her, which the lady having clearly perceived, she told me she liked to observe my surprise, which pleased her a thousand times more than any protestations I might make. Her friend likewise unmasked when she saw both of us getting over our shyness. I knew her from having frequently seen her in society, but as to the other one, I do not know where she can have hidden herself for me never to have seen her. For indeed, though Paris is very large and even resembles a great forest where one shows oneself but to those one wishes, this only applies to ordinary people. Those of any birth are seen either at the play or the public promenades, at Court, or the churches. Consequently, though one may not oneself know them, their names are familiar because one must have met someone who is acquainted with them or has a friend who can tell him who they are. However, it was I (at least, the lady has since said so) who was the cause of her appearing nowhere. She confessed that, having one day seen me at Notre Dame, where she had gone with one of her friends whom she had asked who I might be, she had found me so much to her liking that, to banish her first im-

pressions, she had determined to see me no more, but not having eventually been able to overcome her feelings, she had acted as I have described, when she had learnt that my wife had separated from me.

She was as much married as I was, and did not live with her husband either. He was a sort of madman, whom they had been obliged to shut up in the Bastille for his follies, without any hope of his ever getting out of it. He indeed died there, which has relieved his wife of a great burden, since there is none so heavy as to be the spouse of such a man. She was of much better family than he, but as in return he was much richer, her parents had forced her to marry him against her own wishes. At present she had not come off badly, because he was shut up and she had a daughter. The one saved her from his follies, which had caused her much suffering, the other gave her the control of all his property, which she did what she liked with without having to account for it, as she had been placed in just the same position as a widow, in which more consideration had been shown to the interests of her relatives than is usually the case. Be this as it may, our first interview having resulted as I have described, I soon discovered by the sequel that what she had told me had been prompted by the real sentiments of her heart. Indeed, though she loved me, if I may say so, to the pitch of folly, I never saw so much discretion combined with such passion. She would never even allow me to kiss her finger-tips and thus made me so amorous, that I never call to mind having ever loved anyone so much as I very soon loved her. I love her still, to-day, as passionately as is possible, because there is nothing more exciting than virtue.

Besides, I am under infinite obligations to her. Her purse has always been at my entire disposal, and that without her ever consenting to have any account or bill. I am pretty sure that she had an idea that I should marry her, were my wife to die, and I have let her think what she likes about this. Not that I mean to say I would not marry her, if such a thing were to occur, for I know it would be a good thing for me in every way; indeed, there could be no greater happiness for me than to marry a woman with so many good qualities, but as I know that such ideas must not be entertained in my present state, I have never let her divine my thoughts about it.

Be this as it may, her assistance was of use to me, as I have said, to compete with M. de Maulevrier, in the great expenses to which he put his company. He wanted them to have gold tunics which cost I do not know how much money, and, as I did not intend to have my company eclipsed, I did all I could to stop such a thing happening. Meanwhile, as it would not be right that I should make people ruin themselves on account of his vanity, I assisted those who were not in a position to do all that was needful to keep up with the others.

I did all this at the expense of the lady, who helped me to help those who had to be assisted or else dismissed from the company. Thus, M. de Maulevrier did not attain his ends, and his men did not eclipse mine. He was haughty to the extreme of folly, and this did him more harm than he imagined, not only with ordinary people, but even with his Majesty, who, if he esteemed him at all, did so merely for the sake of his brother. His musketeers were made to suffer for their

commander's vanity and pride, and the mania for entering his company soon ran its course, which coming to the ears of M. Colbert, who at bottom was just as proud, he administered a reproof to his brother.

Meanwhile, the King chose a general to command the little army he was about to send to the help of Holland. Pradel, who was in great favour since the peace, was selected. The King's troops joined the Dutch army and recaptured some small fortresses which the Bishop of Munster had taken. This warlike prelate then showed himself more tractable and began to speak of negotiations for peace, which he had previously rejected. The Dutch welcomed these overtures, for they had been very badly handled by the English, their fleet in a sea fight on the 13th of June[1] having lost at least fifteen vessels, together with their admiral who had been killed. The Duke of York, who commanded the enemy, had attacked them again the next day to make his victory more complete, but Vice-Admiral Tromp had saved the rest of the fleet by his firmness and prudence, and no further harm was done.

Now, therefore, as the English had become so haughty that they would hear no talk of peace, the Dutch gave way in many things to the Bishop of Munster, which they would not have done before, and this prelate made no difficulties about coming to terms, for he did not wish to have to do with our King. These matters were not, however, immediately arranged, and our troops therefore wintered in Holland, which so annoyed the people of that country that they made further efforts to conclude a peace with the bishop. Nevertheless, they were pretty safe with regard to England, for such

[1] 1665.

a dreadful plague had broken out there, that in the City of London alone, an enormous number of people had died. It is true that it was there that it raged most furiously, so much so that it was believed not one inhabitant would be left alive.

Our ambassadors had already left London, as the King of England, after having apparently accepted the mediation of his Majesty, put forward, notwithstanding such insolent demands that it was easy to perceive that he did not want peace. Though the plague continued to ravage the kingdom, he would not abate his demands, either because he hoped it was too violent to last long, or because he thought that this disease, which is rightly called the scourge of God, would not extend as far as the sea to affect his troops. The Dutch were consequently obliged to ask for help against him, as they had done against the Bishop of Munster, and an offensive treaty was made between the two States. Whilst this had been happening, Philip IV., King of Spain, had died,[1] and the Marquis de Louvois deemed that a good opportunity had arisen (as peace had prevailed for some time) for him to show his value as a minister. He resolved upon a war, the ambition and courage of the young King serving as a sure guarantee that success would soon follow, directly some pretext had been discovered. Consequently, all his efforts were now directed to such an end, and eventually, he managed to convince the King that certain parts of Flanders should, in virtue of their having belonged to Don Balthazar, his wife's twin brother, fall to his share. His Majesty at first made some demur, but a lawyer having been sent to

1 September, 1665.

Malines and declaring on his return that the law of Flanders certainly upheld the King's claim, an appeal to arms became inevitable, and Louis XIV. secretly made preparations for war.

Whilst this was on foot, the Dutch, who were desirous (at no matter what price) of getting rid of the troops the King had sent to help them, concluded a treaty of peace at Cleves, with the Bishop of Munster. They had previously made one with the Elector of Brandenburg and some other German princes, so that, should this prelate not yield to reason, they would be able to coerce him in spite of himself. One would have thought they had no need to do this, since the greatest King in Christendom was on their side, but the conduct of the French had seemed suspicious to them, so that they were anxious to take precautions in case of need. The Bishop of Munster gave them back all he had taken. Our troops having returned to France after this treaty, the Comte de Guiche alone did not accompany them by reason of his still being exiled. Meanwhile, not being able to fight any longer on land, he fought at sea against the English, who, the year after their victory, had returned to seek for the Dutch in the Channel, expecting, or at least hoping, that Fortune would be as propitious to them as before; but as she is fickle, being to-day for one side and to-morrow for the other, especially in warfare, when one is often beaten when thinking to vanquish others, things turned out quite contrary to their hopes. After having fought three days in succession,[1] the Duke of Albemarle, who was in command, was obliged to give way, and retired into the Thames to have his ships

1 The 18th, 19th, and 20th of June, 1666.

refitted. Returning six weeks later and advancing into the Channel, he gave battle to the same enemy as before, and claimed a victory, because Cornelius Evertsen, Admiral of Zealand, was killed in the battle.

Not that he had great reason to boast, since, but for this casualty, things were pretty even on both sides. The Comte de Guiche and some French volunteers performed real wonders, which made his father hope the King would pardon him, for his Majesty especially esteemed brave people. The duc had been the third to risk himself in a fire ship to go and set one of the chief English vessels on fire, in the face of a hail of musket shots from all sides, and had even renewed his attempts several times, a thing which won him the admiration of friend and foe alike. The Maréchal de Grammont took good care to report this to his Majesty, but the only reply he made was, that his son carried everything to an extreme, so that one might say he was equally brave and equally foolish. Accordingly, the maréchal said no more, and resolved to await another opportunity of trying to make the King relent.

The Dutch, having thus had their revenge, strengthened themselves with friends and allies on whom they might reckon more surely than on the King, whom they suspected of secretly inciting the English against them. Be this true or false, they tried to make peace without his participation, but his Britannic Majesty's demands proving exorbitant, they made a treaty with the King of Denmark and the princes of the house of Brunswick, to prevent some German princes, who were jealous of their power, from attacking them. Charles II. was beforehand with the King of

Denmark, who wanted to declare war upon him, by himself declaring it. Meanwhile, Spain arranged an alliance with the Emperor, to whom Marguerite Marie Therèse of Austria, sister of our Queen, was given in marriage. Philip IV. had ordered this marriage before he died, and had appointed this princess to inherit his throne, in case his son should die childless; at this time he excluded her elder sister, the Queen of France, and any children she might have by his Majesty. The King had held his peace about all this, but thought none the less for that, and raised troops at the end of the year to support the claims I have before mentioned.

The Queen-mother would never have allowed this, had she been still alive, and would have saved her house such a blow by her entreaties, but, unluckily for Spain, she had died in the month of January,[1] after suffering for a long time. She had ended her days with a cancer in the breast, which she had concealed for at least four or five years, without mentioning it to anyone; but being at last unable to support the pain any longer, she confided in one of her maids, who informed the doctors. As they had been told too late, and they were besides not very clever, their remedies proved useless; the cancer burst, so that this princess, who was certainly the cleanest person in the world and had always taken the greatest care of her bosom, which was very beautiful, perceived herself slowly dying in an indescribably fetid state. She manifested admirable patience and humility, and as she had been very pious all her life and as people

1 January 20th, 1666.

usually die as they have lived, she gave up the ghost in a state of mind worthy of the virtue she had always shown. On her death-bed, she begged the King to pardon all those who had been banished or imprisoned on her account. Bussi Rabutin was one of these,—at least, he had insulted her, as he had many other people, but the King who, humane as he is, does not easily forget certain crimes, let him remain at the Bastille, as I have before said, without paying any attention to his petition.

The raising of troops cost his Majesty nothing, for there was such a rage for ruining oneself for him that all the nobility requested leave to raise companies of cavalry at their own expense. M. de Louvois knew that M. Colbert had gained his influence over the King only by economising and increasing his finances; so, taking care to follow his example, he took these fools at their word. Thus the King, in a very short time, had five or six thousand horse without loosing his purse-strings, and besides, these troops were much better turned out than his old ones. France did not lack generals to put at the head of this little army, for the King had not as yet raised many soldiers. He had, nevertheless, called out several regiments of infantry, which he named after certain provinces of his kingdom, contrary to the practice which had up to that time prevailed, for only the old regiments had been on such a footing, such as those of Picardy, Champagne, Normandy, and the others. Owing to the influence of the Vicomte de Turenne, the Marquis de Créqui, a friend of his, was recalled from banishment and made commander of the army, which caused much jealousy at Court, for the King would often shut himself up for

two or three hours at a time with the vicomte. The Marquis de Louvois, in particular, could not bear it, being afraid that this general would make use of his opportunities to discredit him with his Majesty.

The Marquis de Créqui came to pay his respects to the King at St. Germain, where the Court for some time past had nearly always been, his Majesty having declared that, in order to make the Parisians repent of all they had done during his minority, he would no longer take up his abode amongst them. Indeed, since that time he has only occasionally gone to their city, which cannot be very agreeable for them. The marquis met with a good reception and set out some days later to take command of his army, which he collected near Luxembourg, whilst the King took the road to Flanders, meanwhile obliging the Duc de Lorraine to send him most of his troops, so as to prevent him proving troublesome. M. Colbert remained at Paris, which he could not leave on account of his duties; for even when the King was at St. Germain, or Versailles, where he was building as fast as he could, he returned to that city once or twice a week. M. Colbert had been carrying out his great and dangerous scheme of reducing the annuities of the Hôtel de Ville, at great danger to himself, and could not sleep very peacefully, though he had adopted strong measures with such people as had threatened him. He was now commencing a new operation which affected many individuals, especially some great nobles. This was the "réunion des domaines aliénés," but, as it did not affect the populace so much as the other matter, it was hardly spoken of.

The King, before setting out, had sent a courier to

Spain to ask his Catholic Majesty, who was under the regency of his mother, to make restitution of what he claimed by right of the Queen, his wife. He had previously published a book setting forth his claims, so that foreign Powers might see he was only claiming his due. The regent made reply that his marriage contract had put all such pretensions out of the question. Accordingly his Majesty recalled his ambassador, and sent away the one representing the King of Spain at the French Court. The Comte de Monterei, who was then governor of the Low Countries, immediately sent couriers to the neighbouring Courts, to urge them to oppose the King of France, of whose growing power they might otherwise some day have reason to repent. The English, with their usual jealousy, set forth in their Parliament how seriously the King's doings affected their country. As a beginning, he had seized a town founded by the Comte de Monterei, to which he had given the name of the King his master, having called it Charles-Roi; such an impression was made by this that England, which had refused all the Dutch overtures for peace up to that time, now entirely veered round in favour of them. Nothing else was talked of in the streets of London but a reconciliation with Holland and a war with our King. The English were the more keen about this, as they had seen Frenchmen fighting against them in the last two sea fights against the Dutch, and so wished to be revenged and to make Louis XIV. repent of having helped Holland against them.

Charles II., who wished to keep on good terms with his Majesty as long as he could, tried to alter the determination of his Parliament, by pointing out

that such a course would mean the making of a disadvantageous peace, but it would not listen and, taking the matter in hand itself, soon concluded a peace satisfactory to both countries. The King had now in less than no time made a number of conquests and, perceiving that he was exciting great jealousy, sent off persons he could trust to the different Powers. He thought of sending me to England, the road to which I knew so well; besides which, I had made myself so agreeable to his Britannic Majesty that he had wanted to keep me by him, which augured well for the success of any negotiations I might undertake. M. de Louvois, however, who only liked his Majesty to employ his own men, dissuaded the King, declaring that I could not disappear without everyone at once becoming curious to know where I had gone, and, as this voyage should be kept secret, the mission must not be entrusted to a man in my position.

The treaty between England and the Dutch, combined with the hostility of Sweden, did not stop his Majesty from proceeding to besiege Lille, the capture of which would be the best end to the campaign, since it was the capital of French Flanders. It had been fortified with much care both by Monterei and the governors who had preceded him.

The Spaniards were delighted at the King's having formed this resolve, hoping it would prove unsuccessful; finding, however, that the governor, a great enemy of the French, who had promised them he would die rather than yield, was very hard pressed, they ordered Marcin to assemble all the troops he could and to assist him. Marcin tried to cut off his Majesty's supplies, but was baffled in his attempt by their being sent from Douai,

which the King had taken a month before. Perceiving this, he tried to relieve Lille in another way by breaking through the French troops, which, as the surrounding lines were thin (for we had but few troops to spread over four or five leagues), was not very difficult. The King sent for the Marquis de Créqui to come up immediately. He was then near Limbourg, which was far distant, but being vigilant, he speedily traversed the Ardennes, crossed the Meuse and advanced from the direction of Arras. Whilst the marquis was on his way, the King, who let no chance slip, detached some of the regiment of guards to capture the demi lune. Cavois, whom I have before mentioned, was still a lieutenant in it; he was reputed to be a brave man, and even to rather like playing the bully. Be this as it may, on learning that he was to take part in this assault, he began to shiver with fright, and declared that he much feared his last day had come, for a presentiment had seized him which he could not get the better of. He knew this was foolish, but, as people about to die usually spoke the truth, it was right for him to follow their example, since he had not long to live. Some jeered at his folly, which at another time he would not have willingly allowed, for he was not the man to let his toes be trodden on without crying out "Ouff"; but as in one moment he had completely changed, he pretended not to notice it. His friends were quite surprised, and did their best to revive his spirits, but he was already more than half dead, so affected was he by his thoughts! Indeed, if he had been able to have escaped taking part in this attack with honour, he would not have gone, but as this was impossible, he armed himself from head to foot

and went to the trenches. He had been right to show so much fear. His armour, though proof against musket shots, proved but a useless encumbrance, for a bullet struck him exactly in the place where a hole was suited to it,—where the cuirass is attached to the headpiece by a hook. He fell dead on the spot. The King was told of this, and would have scarcely believed it had it not been confirmed by people who were to be trusted; but all the officers in the regiment saying the same thing, which I have just described, he was eventually obliged to abandon his incredulity.

Lille finding itself very hard pressed after the capture of the demi lune, the governor, notwithstanding that Marcin was marching to his relief, forgot his promise and proposed a capitulation, either because he did not know this or thought it useless against a great king who seemed to have victory at his beck and call. Shortly afterwards, his Majesty, in whose escort I was on this occasion, met and defeated Marcin, Créqui, and Bellefonds, who attacked at the same time. This terminated the campaign, though we were as yet only at the end of August and the weather was the finest in the world. It may be that the King was eager to reach Arras, where the Queen, with Mdlle. de la Vallière, awaited him; so, leaving his army under the command of the Vicomte de Turenne, he gave the governorship of Lille to the Marquis de Bellefonds, with orders to all the other governors of our fortresses in Flanders to obey him. Already the territory we held was beginning to be called French Flanders, a name which it has kept up to to-day.

Before taking his departure, his Majesty ordered this new governor to conciliate the inhabitants under

him who were hostile. The people of Lille, in particular, showed a brutal aversion to their new guests. The King had left them a garrison of five or six thousand men, which was not too much for such a large and disaffected town. Bellefonds ordered all the officers to put up with something from their hosts, so as to win them over by gentleness and kindness, a course which would have done very well with more reasonable folk. Be this as it may, a lieutenant of the guards had two or three days later a thorough chance of exercising his self-control, so that I doubt whether even a capuchin would have acted as he did. Being in command of his company, the captain of which was absent, he had occasion to write a line or two about a matter which could not be delayed. This made him enter a baker's shop, where he asked the man for a pen and ink. The baker insolently answered that there were people in the town who sold those kind of goods, to whom he might apply if he wanted them. Surprised at this reply,the lieutenant, forgetting perhaps, the instructions of the Marquis de Bellefonds, rejoined that this was very rude, and, if he wanted to refuse, he should yet do so more politely. No sooner had he spoken than the baker gave him a box on the ears, which, to use a familiar expression, was so severe that it caused the officer to see an infinity of stars. The man, who was surprised, was without doubt the poor victim. Thousands of others in his place would have known what to do to revenge such an insult, namely, to run the man through. Indeed, he need not have taken such trouble, for twenty musketeers of his company at once began to cover the baker

with their pieces and were only waiting till the lieutenant should have got out of the way to fire. However, this officer, wiser than one can say, keeping control of himself, as he alone was able, not only made the musketeers withdraw, but ordered the whole company to march. Meanwhile, he remained at the baker's door till it had passed by, from fear of some soldier wishing to avenge him.

No sooner did Bellefonds hear of this incident than he informed the Court. Nevertheless, he ordered the aldermen to themselves see justice done about this insolent fellow, and they had him arrested. The Marquis de Louvois, to whom his despatch was sent, informed his Majesty, who deemed the lieutenant's behaviour so fine that he at once gave him a company in the guards. As to the baker, after having been in prison for some days, the newly-made captain asked for his pardon and obtained it, either on account of some understanding with the Court, or because he wanted to push his generosity to the last extreme.

After the King had thus left the army, the enemy, who had retaken Alost, repaired some of its fortifications which had become ruinous through neglect. This displeased the Vicomte de Turenne, who at once set out to attack it and killed at least three or four hundred men in one hour; after which, he entirely destroyed the fortress. After this, the army being weakened by the different garrisons which had been taken from it, the Vicomte de Turenne thought it best to end the campaign and marched towards Arras himself, taking the road to Dourlens. While on the way there, part of his escort was attacked and routed by the enemy in an ambush, which they had arranged at a very

dangerous spot near St. Paul. On his return, the King reviewed some of the newly-raised companies of cavalry, which he thought very fine, especially that of the Duc de Ventadour, who, though a hunchback, was a man of great courage and was very near coming to blows with the Marquis d'Albert who scoffed at him, but this was prevented.

So many conquests of his Majesty in such a short time thoroughly disturbed the Dutch, who disliked such a great king being near them. They accordingly tried to get England and Sweden to stop him from taking the rest of Flanders. They had trouble with his Britannic Majesty, who feared entering upon such a war; mayhap he also had some regard for the King, which was the reason why he would not fall in with their views. Nevertheless, his Parliament did what they could, and having somewhat strongly shown him the disadvantage to himself and his kingdom of letting such a powerful monarch establish himself in these provinces, they made him make a treaty with Holland and Sweden, which obliged all three to bring the war to an end. The Parliament further wanted Charles II. to take up arms against the King and join with these two Powers and the Spaniards, to make him give up not only what he had taken in this campaign but also his conquests in the war which had preceded it. But it was all very well for them to worry themselves about this; the King of England was determined to do no more than he had already done.

Be this as it may, the Dutch having sent Van Beuningue as ambassador extraordinary to Paris to arrange this matter according to the treaty, he made use of language which did not seem respectful enough

towards his Majesty, and he began to arm, so as not to be dictated to. Nevertheless, he offered to rest content with the conquests he had made, which was thought to be a concerted plan with Charles II. to render the league powerless. This treaty had been called the Triple Alliance, because of the three Powers engaged in it.

Such a proposal did not please the Netherlands, though the King of England supported the pretensions of his Majesty, on the ground of the decision of the lawyers of Malines, which I have already mentioned. They then tried to win over Sweden, but as the King had found means to make friends for himself there, they received much the same answer as they had obtained from the English King.

Meanwhile, M. le Prince, who had gone to his governorship in Burgundy, annoyed at seeing himself held in such small esteem at Court, tried to distinguish himself by some great deed. He sent a confidential friend of his to the Marquis d'Yarine, governor of la Comté,[1] whose acquaintance he had made whilst in the Spanish service, to tell him that, if he would give up that province to the King, he would have such a great reward bestowed upon him as he could never hope to obtain the half of, even if he were to remain a hundred years with the Spaniards. Such great promises, though there was nothing positive about them, overcame this governor, who thought M. le Prince was acting under orders. Feeling, therefore, quite confident, he made reply that he had been in the service of his Catholic Majesty for nearly fifty years without having obtained any advancement, and

1 Franche Comté.

saw it would always be so, if he lived as long again; for this reason he would place his interests in his hands. M. le Prince, delighted at this, at once wrote to the Court, taking care, in order to gain credit for himself, to broach the subject as if nothing was arranged for certain. The Marquis de Louvois (for all communications to the King had now to go through him, even those of a prince of the blood) having broached the subject to his Majesty, M. le Prince was authorised to make this treaty, which was already settled, except the stipulation as to what the governor was to be given, for all the promises were vague ones. The Marquis d'Yarine was delighted at this, all was soon agreed upon, and a great sum, with a pension promised to him. The King, now being assured that he had only to enter this province to be able to say, as Julius Caesar had done, "I came, I saw, I conquered," left St. Germain-en-Laye on the 2nd of February, notwithstanding the inclemency of the season. The Prince de Condé with an army had already preceded him to take possession of this conquest or rather purchase. He was followed by most of those who had accompanied him to Flanders during his revolt, who thought themselves born again, for he had kept as quiet as any private individual and, though he was not yet an old man, the prince felt a good ten years younger directly he found himself on horseback. The town of Besançon surrendered without a blow the same day as his Majesty reached Dijon, and the other fortresses of the province did the same thing. The King took but twenty-three days about this conquest.

This event disconcerted the Dutch just as it did the Spaniards, and many others, such as the Duc de

Lorraine, who found himself hemmed in on all sides like a prisoner. The Spaniards, thinking Charles II. too well disposed towards the King, attempted to win over his Parliament and plotted so much that one would have said they were trying to make mischief between it and the King of England. This set this prince very much against them; however, as he was extremely diplomatic, though everyone did not consider him to be so, he gave no signs of it, though he has not yet forgiven them.

What had happened in the Comté having made the Dutch fear that the King would effect some fresh conquest, they asked for a suspension of arms between France and Spain and begged the King of England to join them in asking for it. Charles II. thereupon informed the King of it and his Majesty would not refuse, whilst stipulating it should only apply to the sieges, for he wished his armies to continue living at the expense of his enemies, who were nevertheless in almost as bad a state as it was possible to be. Indeed, Flanders, besides being ravaged by war, was further desolated by the plague, which raged so fiercely that only famine was lacking for it to be afflicted with all three scourges, the choice of which God gave David as a punishment for his sin.

We took the field in good time that year, so as to continue devastating the enemy's country. We were divided into two camps, our advance being still directed towards Brussels. La Feuillade and the Marquis de Coassin commanded one, the Duc de Rocquelaure the other. La Feuillade and Coassin were of entirely different characters, one being civility itself, the other rude to an unheard of degree. La

Feuillade, however, was much the more popular, for the civility of Coassin was shown to everyone alike, and he was no more polite to a person of rank than to a scullion. This was a habit of his, either natural or acquired, and he would not get rid of it in spite of all one could say. Even were I to-day to send my footman to him, he would treat him just as civilly as if it was myself! Coassin, besides being lieutenant-general, was "maitre de camp general" of cavalry, in the place of Bussi Rabutin, whom the King had made resign, having disposed of his place for 250,000 livres, which he (Coassin) had been obliged to give for it. Nevertheless, as he looks more like a virgin than a man holding such a fine post, he has not kept it long. The Marquis de Louvois was well pleased at his giving it over to the Chevalier de Fourilles, who is another kind of man altogether. After passing six weeks or so in camp, peace was made by a treaty which was concluded at Aix la Chapelle,[1] whereby all the King's conquests were left to him except Franche Comté, which he had to give up. Nevertheless, this was itself a nice morsel; indeed, he was sorry to give in about it, but was obliged to do so, for the English were playing the deuce to make their King declare against him.

The Court had not discontinued its pleasures, though war is no time for them and, indeed, should throw everything else into the shade. Meanwhile, things got worse when peace was made, and everyone set to work to make love. No one, however, did this so thoroughly as Mademoiselle de St. Gelais, maid of honour to the Queen, although she was

[1] 2nd May, 1866.

gloriously ugly. Nevertheless, she thought herself passable, and was of such good family that she got it into her head that she could have her love affair like anyone else, which would have been true, if rank sufficed to make men amorous. Be this as it may, a certain Norman gentleman of rank, imagining that she was richer than was the case, made up to her, which she took so seriously that she responded to his advances. The lover, however, discovering some time afterwards, that all that glitters is not gold, gave up the game and beat a retreat. The poor girl would not realise the true state of affairs, though her friends told her; but at last, becoming assured of her misfortune, she got as yellow as a guinea, and was then seized with an illness, and not being able to recover the shattering of her hopes, died in less than no time, accusing the Norman of her death, just as if he had assassinated her!

The King was not the only one to gain by the war. Créqui, Bellefonds and Humières, were made Marshals of France. La Feuillade was displeased at these three men being promoted, thinking himself their equal. He resembled Mademoiselle de St. Gelais, so, in order to get rid of his grief at being now under them, he asked the King to let him go to Crete.

The capital of that island had been besieged by the Turks[1] for I do not know how many years, and its surrender now appeared imminent, the besieged and besiegers being, so to speak, at arm's length. This town belonged to the Venetians, who had spent ten times the value of the whole island in holding it.

1 The Turks landed in Crete in 1645, and the siege of the capital began in 1648.

Besides the subsidies supplied to them by the Pope, who was dying of fright lest it should fall into the hands of the infidels (for Crete is not far from Italy), a number of people of rank had come to join in the defence, and had brought money into their dominions. Money, indeed, abounded more than anywhere else in the world, for though war usually impoverishes the country, it enriches the towns on the frontier of which it is waged.

The Comte de St. Paul, son of the Duc de Longueville, and of the sister of M. le Prince (who soon became the elder by his brother falling into a kind of madness) also took part in this voyage. La Feuillade and he found, on their arrival, some things which were surprising in every way, especially the life led by many officers, who, amidst the dangers by which they were on all sides surrounded, lived in such a terrible state of disorder that mere mention of it is horrible. The history of France tells us that the Duc de Nevers, going from Italy to France to the help of the King, upon whose crown the house of Guise was making an attempt, under pretence of religion, took with him two thousand she goats, caparisoned with green velvet with large gold stripes. At the same time, no room for doubt is left us as to why these goats were taken, since it says that they served as pets for Duc de Nevers and his officers. In Crete it was almost the same thing, except that the number of these beasts was more limited than in the camp of the duc. La Feuillade was not the man to stick at much, since he had one day told the King that, if His Majesty became a Turk, he would at once assume the turban! Nevertheless, he could not see one of these goats enter the

room of a certain general every day, without feeling the hair on his head standing up, so disgusted was he. It was not caparisoned in green, like those of the Duc de Nevers, but in black velvet with gold embroidery, and even changed its coat from time to time, for people are usually extravagant when they are fond of anything. In addition, it was made to wear a number of ribbons, some of one colour and some of another, which only added to the disgust with which such eccentricity was viewed. Indeed, the more pleasure that was taken in adorning it, the greater sign was it of that which one does not dare to mention. This is what was already startling about this fortress, to which it must be added that, in another way, the state it was in was no less surprising.

The town was more a mass of stones than what is usually called by that name. All the houses were demolished by cannon, and if there was any place to live in, it was only in the cellars. The Venetians were not so anxious to keep it as at the beginning of the siege, because there were no more inhabitants, and it would have cost immense sums to rebuild it. They consequently sustained the siege, but carelessly, and only to occupy the infidels, from fear they should spread themselves elsewhere.

La Feuillade, who was ignorant of this policy, no sooner[1] arrived than he proposed to Morosini, the chief Venetian commander, a number of schemes to make the infidels raise the siege. Monsieur pretended to understand French but imperfectly, so as not to have to give him a definite answer, and continued to

1 In November, 1668.

purposely misunderstand La Feuillade, when he wanted all the available troops to be confided to him for a sortie. Eventually, this threw him into such a rage that he hardly knew who he was. He indeed had reason for this, having come so far to do nothing. At last, he resolved to make a sortie with the people he had brought from France, without waiting for other help, which indeed would not have mattered very much; but either from a desire to show Morosini that he did not need him nor his men, or from swagger, he made as funny[1] a sortie as has been made for a long time past. He held in his hand, instead of a sword or other weapon, a . . . . . that is to say, one of those silver-handled whips which have been fashionable for some time past, though they are much more fitted for a courier than a soldier. I do not know if by this he meant that only a whip was needed to chastise the Turks, as if they had been pigs, but he found whom he was speaking to, when he was face to face with them. They gave him a sound thrashing, so that his whip was of no use except to make his horse gallop fast. After this ill success, he was rather confused, and, continued to quarrel with Morosini more and more. He did not remain long before he re-embarked for France, which country he reached in a thoroughly bad way, that is to say, he brought back very little glory, and was in great poverty. Consequently, he fell into disgrace at Court. The Comte de St. Paul arrived at the same time. He was even now only

1 La Feuillade took with him in this sortie five hundred gentlemen, whilst the enemy's army consisted of about eighty thousand men, of whom twelve hundred are said to have been killed in this hare-brained enterprise.

seventeen years old, and had his mother's face and the shoulders of his uncle, the Prince de Conti, though he was not as humpbacked as he. His deformity did not prevent the ladies of the Court from making love to him, but they all wasted their powder, except la Maréchalle de . . . . , for whom he showed affection, though she was old enough to have been his mother, or very nearly. Besides this, she had a brutal husband, who understood no trifling. He had often threatened her, and was dangerously jealous. Nevertheless, as he was nearly always in bed, owing to the gout, the couple believed that, as Argus, with all the eyes allotted him by the poets, had once been tricked, they would easily deceive a gouty old man, who was not strong enough to move.

This served him right, as the saying goes, for he was as slanderous as the devil, and scoffed as much as an actor in a farce. To hear him talk, his wife was the only woman people dared to make love to. The Comte de St. Paul was most discreet about this affair, because he was very fond of the lady, and went to see her only when disguised as a lace seller, which part his years and appearance well suited. The intrigue was, consequently, not discovered by the ladies of la Maréchalle, and would never have been known, had she not become *enceinte*. Very few people indeed knew of it, and she only confided her secret to one of her maids, since she could not be confined quite alone. But, as this has no concern with what we are speaking of, I will say no more, and will return to more serious subjects.

After his death, Alexander VII. was succeeded by Cardinal Jules Rospigliosi, who took the name of Clement IX. This pope lived on fairly good terms

with the King, and obtained that which his predecessor had never been able to do—that is, the consent of his Majesty to the destruction of the pyramid in front of the guard-house of the Corsicans, which I have before spoken of. Clement IX., being very much afraid of the town of Crete falling into the hands of the Turks, begged the King, through his nuncio, to send further help there of a more solid kind than that which had been commanded by La Feuillade. However, as the latter had discredited the Venetians a good deal after his return, his Majesty, who was disinclined for distant expeditions, after what had happened at Gigeri, was not disposed to accede to the nuncio's request. Eventually, however, he yielded and despatched some troops[1] under the Duc de Navailles, who asked for this command in order to try and reinstate himself at Court.

This expedition proved a very unfortunate one: for, being thrown into a panic by the explosion of some barrels of powder, our soldiers were decimated by the Turks in a sortie. Amongst other losses, the Duc de Beaufort, who had been in command of the convoy, disappeared. He had left his ship either to watch the fight or take part in it. To this day his fate is unknown, but the most likely thing is that, his head having been cut off, as is the invariable Turkish practice in battle (for the soldiers are rewarded for the number of heads they obtain), it was impossible to recognise him amongst the dead. Navailles might perhaps have stayed in Crete some time longer to try and obtain his revenge, had he not learnt that Morosini had jeered at what had hap-

1 Louis XIV. sent 6,000 men to Crete on this occasion, who reached that island on June 6th, 1669.

pened to him. Besides, as he was a good man and a moral one, he no sooner perceived that the goat, I have before mentioned, was still in fashion, than he wanted to leave a country which, in his opinion, deserved immediate destruction. He, consequently, re-embarked and, as at present it is a criminal thing to be beaten, he fell into disgrace afresh and was banished from the Court for a second time. So true is it that there is good and bad luck in this world!

About the time of his return to France, an envoy of the Grand Seignior arrived. He had been sent to complain of the King's having assisted the Venetians, and also to confer about some business matters in the Levant. His Majesty delayed granting him an audience, because his own ambassador had been treated in a similar way at Constantinople. The Grand Seignior really thinks that to see anyone quickly impairs his dignity, and only does so after many ceremonies. The King, therefore, as was right, followed his example on this occasion. Meanwhile, the envoy and his suite were lodged at his Majesty's expense as long as they continued in the kingdom, for Louis XIV. wished him to make a satisfactory report of the way he had been entertained, when he returned to his country.

The Parisians, who are indeed the stupidest people in the world by reason of the curiosity with which they will run from one end of the town to the other, if only to see a man hung, did not fail to go and see this Turk continually. Many of them were even astounded at his being made like anyone else, as well as at his eating and drinking exactly as they did. They resembled the peasants on a certain property belonging to the late M. de Matignon, in Lower Normandy, who had never

seen their seigneur, who arrived there by chance on Saturday night and went to hear mass next day. These peasants did not fail to attend, and, having eyed M. de Matignon from head to foot and found his face was no more striking than anyone else's, they told one another, when leaving the church, that he was not made in a different way from themselves, and that he prayed to God in just the same fashion ; therefore, as this was a sign that God was even greater than he was, they had been wrong to think so much of him.

Before and after the last campaign, the King had taken pains to put his palaces in such repair (especially Versailles, which he liked better than all the rest) that everything in them looked as fresh as in the house of any private individual. He had had beds for all seasons made there, and they were all magnificent ; but assuredly the finest thing was the gallery where he was wont to receive the Ambassadors. It was decorated with the richest carpets and most exquisite paintings, which he had caused to be collected all over Europe, and even in countries more remote, at inconceivable expense. Besides this, he had a painter in his service who was in no way inferior to the cleverest artist on whom Italy prides herself. Nevertheless, all this was nothing compared to the cabinets, the tables, the vases, the basins, and other similar articles made of massive silver, with which this gallery was filled from one end to the other. The throne he sat upon corresponded, with so much splendour, and though the material of which these things were made caused them to be priceless, their workmanship cost more than everything else.

The Queen of Sweden, passing through France after her abdication, tried to copy the Queen of Sheba. She

had heard that Louis XIV. outshone everything we read of in the Holy Books about Solomon, and came expressly from Rome to see if these reports were true. She was indeed compelled to admit that all she had been told was nothing in comparison with the truth. However, the King soon lost all his esteem for her. While she was at Fontainebleau, she had her first écuyer, the Marquis de Monadeschi, killed, for having been guilty of disrespect towards her by boasting, it is said, of having enjoyed her favours. The King was far from approving of such a deed; he had told her to return to Rome or go somewhere else, and, instead of, like Solomon, sending her away full of presents, sent her off in great confusion.

The envoy of the Grand Seignior was at last admitted to an audience, after having waited a long time. He was astounded at the splendour of Versailles and the good looks of the King, which were set off by a tunic completely covered with the crown diamonds. However, he took care to conceal his thoughts, because it would have contradicted the impression he wished people to have, that all this was as nothing to the riches of the Grand Seignior. However, he was obliged to admire the troops of the King's household, who had been placed on his route, and were worth a thousand times any spahis or janissaries any Grand Seignior ever had. They were all in new clothes, which I am not sure was a good thing, because he might have thought that this had been specially done for him, and that usually they were not wont to present so magnificent an appearance. The envoy was obliged to go through all the same ceremonies—approaching his Majesty's throne as our ambassadors are made to do

in Constantinople, when the Grand Seignior gives them audience. He returned to Paris after the ceremony, and, some time afterwards, set out for his own country. This envoy did not obtain any satisfactory answer to his complaints about Crete, but, as a consolation for this, heard on reaching Marseilles that the Emperor, his master, had at last captured[1] that town. However, he did not learn this from us, but as there are always some ships from Barbary there, it was impossible to prevent him obtaining news of it.

1 The town of Crete capitulated September 6th, 1669.





IX

CASIMIR, King of Poland, had, like the Queen of Sweden, abdicated. Both had been forced to do this, though they tried to make out it was of their own free will. The Poles, who are brave and addicted to the profession of arms, had never thought much of this prince, even before electing him as their sovereign. Casimir had been a Jesuit and a Cardinal before being King—two things not so much opposed to kingship as one might think, since to be a Jesuit or Cardinal is to be full of ambition, and very often inclined to intrigues. He had not been over grieved at leaving a kingdom quite full of plots, to lead a life after his own liking, and, thinking that the house of Condé owed him something, asked M. le Prince to provide him with a retreat in France. Since the affair of Franche-Comté, the Prince de Condé was no longer in such bad odour at Court, and so he not only obtained that which Casimir desired from Louis XIV., but, further, procured him two abbeys as support for him, one of them being the Abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, which is worth an income of no less than eighty thousand livres. Casimir, in due course, arrived at Paris, but he

was not long in acquiring the same reputation there as he had borne at Warsaw. Instead of living like a King or, at least, as an abbé should do, he took to frequenting the society of low women, which coming to his Majesty's ears, he had him told that a change of air would do him good, and he had better go to his other abbey, which was at Evreux. As he could not disobey, he went, without requiring to be told twice.

Meanwhile, his abdication having left the crown of Poland vacant, several people of great importance presented themselves to fill it. The Poles caused it to be offered to M. le Prince, thinking he would be delighted to accept it, but, for some reason or other, he declined it, whilst thanking them for their goodwill. Many plots were made about the question of this crown, and in less than no time all the neighbouring Powers were trying to obtain it for some candidate of their own.

Prince Charles of Lorraine, who had gone to Italy on account of some differences with the reigning Duke as to the succession, had been obliged to leave that country, for he had tried to carry on an intrigue with the Grand Duchess of Tuscany. Her husband, with whom there was no trifling, had given him to understand that, if he did not at once depart, harm might very likely befall him. Amorous as he was, he accordingly found himself obliged to leave, and so he went to the Court of the Emperor.[1] The Dowager Empress was rather fond of him, and as he was a prince of singular merit, mayhap she may have had some idea of becoming his wife, had it not been that she had no desire to blight the hopes of her daughter, who had much the same affection for

1 Leopold I., Emperor of Germany. He reigned from 1658 to 1705.

the prince as herself,—an affection which indeed he reciprocated. Besides, as the Empress reflected, they were both of about the same age, whereas she was more fitted to be his mother than his wife. Be this as it may, both mother and daughter having embraced this prince's cause with equal warmth, they got him into such favour with the Emperor, that he chose him in preference to all others as being worthy of occupying the throne of Poland, and even announced to the people of that country that they could not please him more than by accepting him. As he wished to attach him to his interests by the bonds of blood as well as gratitude, he took care to keep alight the flame which the princess, his sister, had kindled in the young man's heart. Nevertheless, in spite of the Emperor's efforts, the Poles elected one of their own people, Michel Wiesnowiski,[1] who came of one of the best families of their nobility.

This choice much mortified the Prince of Lorraine, who feared he would lose his love together with his hopes of a crown. His suspicion proved only too true, for all princes are alike, politics governing all their actions. The Emperor, to win over the new King of Poland to his party, proceeded to offer him his sister in marriage, and this advantageous offer that sovereign took good care not to refuse, which rendered the Prince de Lorraine inconsolable. The princess, who also was much grieved, not being dazzled by the position to which she was about to be raised, departed for Poland, which would have obliged her lover to quit the Emperor's dominions, had he known where to betake himself. France and Italy were closed to him, and he had no thoughts of going to Spain, which was the only place

1 Michel Korybert Wisniowiecki, 1669—1674.

open. In this pass, it was easy for the Dowager Empress to persuade him to stay. This he eventually did, placing all his hopes in her protection, of which she gave him fresh assurance.

Whilst this was going on, the King of France, who did not retain that deep affection for the memory of the Cardinal which he had shown to him during his life and for some time after his death, obliged his heirs, who did not appear to him any too worthy of the great posts they held, to resign them in favour of more capable people. The Duc de Mazarin, who had been esteemed before he had become the Cardinal's nephew and heir, was the poorest fellow in the world—indeed, he was looked upon merely as a fool and an extravagant person. He had committed a number of follies, either from false zeal or excess of foolishness, of which everyone loudly accused him. But the biggest folly of all was that, though he passionately adored his wife, who hated him like death itself, he never ceased teasing her, so that at last she had to leave him. The King had already made him give up his post of Grand Master of the Artillery, and now obliged him to resign all his other offices. Indeed, when in a profession, one must devote oneself entirely to it, and as the duc always wanted to be with monks, he had much better have become a monk himself and never married. His devotion had made him do a thing about this time which had caused much talk. Objecting to the wife of Lieutenant-General de la Fére seeing a number of officers, with whom he apparently supposed she was more free than was right, he had caused her to be abducted and shut up in a convent. Her husband, however, went to law about the matter, and the duc was adjudged to have acted

wrongly and condemned to pay the costs of the legal proceedings.

This duc having thus begun the downfall of the house of Mazarin, of which he had become the head though belonging to it only through his wife, the Duc de Nevers, who was a much better manager than he, was likewise obliged to resign his post. His Majesty gave it to me without my having dared to ask for it. Seeing the brother of a minister at the head of the second company of musketeers, I was afraid he would select a number of great nobles who asked for it with quite extraordinary keenness. The company had already changed some of its officers after the campaign of Lille. Young Treville had left his place for a regiment of cavalry, but either because he was not so courageous as his father, as his enemies have caused it to be reported, or was seized with a fit of devotion, which is much more likely, he built a house at the Institut des Pères de l'Oratoire, which is beyond the Chartreux, and retired to it.

It was not only for the post which the King had just given me that the great nobles showed themselves greedy, but for each one which fell vacant. Comminges, Governor of Saumur, having died, quite thirty of them asked for it, but his Majesty snubbed the first of these applicants, and enquired what was then to become of his widow and children, if this governorship should be bestowed on another than his eldest son. After this, there were no more requests made for it. Everyone admired the King's goodness in thus interesting himself in the family of a man who was dead, and who had seemed to be forgotten, as is nearly always the case at Court. Nevertheless, the son of Comminges had not

long since imagined he would never want anything more, since he had been very nearly despatched to the other world by bullies.

Having gone alone with a lackey behind him into a place of evil reputation, these wretches had a moment later made their appearance, and regarded him as a young man whom it would be no hard task to insult. This was true, for he was but twenty years old; indeed, I do not know if he was as much, for this happened before the death of the Queen-mother. The first thing they did to get up a row was to say something to him, but, as he was not the stronger, he did not take offence. This did not suit them, since, whilst he remained so prudent, they were unable to find any cause for ill-using him, as was their intention. The least they proposed to do to him was to take away his money, his sword and clothes and, perhaps, even his life, if he gave them any trouble. Accordingly, perceiving him make no answer, they insulted him in another fashion and gave him some blows on the nose. Comminges let them do this for fear of worse happening. Meanwhile, being eager to escape from their hands, he told them that he was a good sort of fellow and would treat them well if they would be a little more gentle with him. He had no money in his pocket, but as he had good credit at a wine-shop not far away, he would, if they liked, send for a dozen good bottles. When the bullies heard he had no money, they accepted his offers, rather than risk getting nothing at all, and consented to his calling his lackey, provided he would give him his orders out loud before them. The lackey was at once called up and, Comminges having told him to go and get a

dozen bottles of wine of the reddest sort possible, like those he was wont to have when anyone dined with him, the man well understood that by the word "red" he meant the Queen's guards, who wore tunics of that colour. Accordingly, having left the house to fetch them, he made the more hurry about bringing them back with him, because his master appeared to be in the hands of regular ruffians. The bullies were very astonished when they saw the guards instead of the bottles of wine. Comminges regained his tongue directly he saw the soldiers. He had lost it for the preceding quarter of an hour, though, with his falsetto voice, he usually talked more than ten other people together. He even at once drew his sword, and having given these honest fellows some cuts in the face, in return for the blows he had received, he made them go down the stairs a little faster than their natural inclinations would have led them to do.

Since the Dutch, assisted by England and Sweden, had obliged the King to make peace, a medal, which was attributed to Van Beuningue, had made its appearance, which was as insolent as it was clever. On each side of it was depicted a sun, with these words in Latin: *In conspectu meo stetit Sol.* As Van Beuningue's name was Joshua, it was clear that he meant by this that, just as Joshua had stopped the course of the sun, he had arrested the conquests of the King, who was here compared to the sun because he had adopted it as a device. This was the more offensive to his Majesty, as it was true. One cannot believe that his superiors had a hand in this medal, supposing he had forgotten himself so much as to have it struck; mayhap he had not thought of it any more than I might have

done; and to tell the truth, I am not a pleasant man to meet when I am eight days together dreaming of anything! Be this as it may, what is most certain is, that another medal was avowedly struck by them, which was no less objectionable to his Majesty. It represented Holland reposing upon a trophy of arms, with the words: *Post laborem requies.* Meanwhile, for fear of its meaning not being understood, care was taken to have it spread abroad in the world that Holland had protected those kings whom one had tried to oppress, assured the peace of Europe (which was in great danger without her) and done a thousand other fine things, which indeed were true, but which very much offended his Majesty, because it was he who was indicated as having wished to do that which Holland boasted of having prevented.

One cannot imagine how the Dutch allowed themselves to produce this, since it was bound to make them enemies, there was no need of; for, besides being feeble, as had been shown in the war against the Bishop, Holland was divided against itself. William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, had been brought up by his parents just like the son of an ordinary middle-class man, without any suite or state. At first he had not realised his misfortune, but, growing up, he did so, and, as if by chance, collected around him those who had been devoted to his family. Together with these adherents, he resolved to do all he could to extricate himself from a position so unsuitable to one of his birth, he whose ancestors had done the Republic such great service! At that time the head of Holland was a man named John de Witt, who was clever and sensible if ever man was. He was

the born enemy of this prince, because his father had been imprisoned in the Castle of Louvestein, where prisoners of State are confined. He accused the late Prince of Orange of having caused this imprisonment, and from this arose his hatred. The whole Republic had entire confidence in De Witt, for he had avoided making people jealous, and affected an extreme simplicity, being affable to all and saluting everyone in the street; besides, he was always simply clothed and plain in furniture and living. In short, he lived like a man devoid of ambition, whereas he perhaps had more of it than anyone else.

At one time, John de Witt had thought that the Prince of Orange would not give him great trouble, because he had always been very delicate in youth. Indeed, his mother had begged the King to send him a doctor from Paris, and he had sent Dacquin, who pulled him round by his remedies or, as is more likely, the illness having run its course, nature began to assist him. Be this as it may, the year 1670 having come, the Duc de Lorraine, whose restless spirit never allowed him to remain in peace, tried to persuade the Dutch that they must beware of the King, because he contemplated only revenge on account of his conquests having been stopped by them. The Prince of Orange no sooner learnt of it, than he seized the opportunity to ask the Republic to re-establish him in the posts of his ancestors, which were those of Statdholder and Admiral, but John de Witt opposed this, declaring that war was not yet imminent, and that, in any case, the King of England would assist Holland. This hope had no great foundation, for Charles II., who had often urged the claims of the Prince of Orange, was offended at his recommendations

having been disregarded ; besides, the Dutch competed with the English in commerce to the disadvantage of the latter.

Meanwhile, Louis XIV., who in the ten years of his reign had learnt a good deal, sent to his Britannic Majesty to propose an offensive and defensive alliance; but that prince did not dare agree to it, by reason of the antipathy of his people to France. The King, however, seeing that he would with time succeed in his object, made use of a secret which he had perhaps read of in the life of Louis XI., or at least had heard mentioned. This monarch had been wont to study the character of the princes he had to deal with, and then to try and profit by it. For instance, he used to send beautiful women to those who loved the fair sex, and, as these ladies were his pensioners, he obtained knowledge of many secrets of great importance. The King followed his example, feeling sure that Charles II. would the more easily fall into the trap, because his heart had never been able to resist any beautiful person for an instant.

At the time we are speaking of, his mistress was the Countess of Castlemaine, whom he had created Duchess of Cleveland, but he was so annoyed on account of her continual infidelities that, though there were occasional reconciliations, there was every reason to think he would give her up entirely, directly he had found something to his taste. Madame,—Duchesse d'Orléans had then a maid of honour who was just the thing for this prince. She was beautiful and asked nothing better than to become the mistress of a great king, for she had come to Court with no other idea, and had imagined, while she was still at home, that she would

supplant Mdlle. de la Vallière. The King, however, did not like professional coquettes, and besides, she had no patrons at Court to push her forward as they did others. Indeed, it was extraordinary how husbands sang the praises of their wives to the King, relatives those of their relations, friends those of their friends, and even lovers those of their mistresses, because all without exception desired to make their fortune by means of the person dearest to them. Be this as it may, Mdlle de Keroualle[1] (for such was the name of this maid of honour) was already beginning to chafe at her ill success, when the King selected her to carry out his wishes. He spoke about the matter to Madame, whom he was very fond of by reason of her great cleverness, and because she had besides something about her which prevented anyone ever being bored with her. As she liked his Majesty, she willingly agreed to herself take this girl to England, to see if she would produce such an effect as her beauty gave reason to believe.

The King, in order to carry out his plan without exciting suspicion, went with the Queen on a journey to French Flanders and took Madame with him. Having eventually reached Dunkirk, he sent to compliment Charles II., as if not wishing to be so near his dominions without doing him that civility; Madame availed herself of this opportunity to do the same, and sent word to the King, her brother, that, if he would despatch a yacht, she would at once cross the sea, so as to have the pleasure of going to pay him her respects. His Britannic Majesty was delighted at her idea; so, sending one at once, she crossed to

1 Louise Renée de Pen-au-Coult de Keroualle was born in Brittany in 1649. She died Duchess of Portsmouth in 1734.

England with a magnificent suite. To set off the beauty of Mademoiselle de Keroualle, Madame, some days before leaving Paris, had made her a considerable present which in reality came from the King. Be this as it may, no sooner had this girl appeared at the English Court than Charles II. became thoroughly enamoured of her, and at once told his sister that she must not return to France. To save appearances, Madame would not consent to this, but Mademoiselle de Keroualle, who already had a perfect understanding with his Britannic Majesty, promised him that no sooner should she have got back to the Palais Royal (where Madame lived at Paris) than she would leave her service and rejoin him. Charles II. consented to this; for, amorous as he was, he clearly perceived that Madame must take care of her reputation. Mademoiselle de Keroualle kept her word like an honourable girl, though she was about to commence a career with him which would rob her of such a name. However, as she perhaps reckoned, when adopting it, that she would belong rather to the school of Ninon de Lenclos, who had never broken her word, than to that of the Comtesse ——, who was reputed never to have kept it, she duly retraced her steps.

Before leaving Paris, she was assured that funds would not be stinted, provided she made the King of England do all that was required of him. She succeeded well enough, but Madame, to whom this piece of good fortune was due, never saw the end of it, because she died some days later in such a strange manner that foul play was suspected. Monsieur, with whom she had several disputes on account of the

Chevalier de Lorraine, had gone with her to his house at St. Cloud, and Madame calling for something to drink, because she was very thirsty, an iced glass of chicory water was brought her. She took it and drank it down at one draught. Hardly had she done so than she cried out that her end had come and that she was poisoned. Her face at the same time changed colour and her eyes, which were naturally very brilliant at once became dim, from which it was only too clearly perceived that, even were she not poisoned, something no less dangerous had happened. The King, at Versailles, was hurriedly informed of her condition and, speedily arriving, found her very ill. She said a few words to him which showed that she continued to be convinced that her end had been hastened. His Majesty tried to dispel this idea, thinking it good neither for her body nor her soul. He saw her take some remedies ordered by her doctors, but perceiving that they had no hopes of their proving effectual and not being able to any longer witness her sufferings, he returned to his carriage and went back to Versailles. Madame died the next morning,[1] after having steadfastly persisted in declaring, to her last breath, that her enemies had caused her startling end. She was but twenty-six years old, which was very young to die so suddenly. Monsieur had loved her passionately before marriage, but this princess having found fault with the affection he bore his favourite, it had so altered their relations (together with another circumstance) that they sometimes quarrelled before their principal servants.

1 She died at three in the morning, June 29th, 1670.

The King could not believe that anyone had been so wicked as to attempt to end her days in such a manner; but, as the statement she had persistently made required to be cleared up, so as to punish the guilty, if it were true, his Majesty had a post-mortem examination made by his principal doctors. He even caused the English Ambassador to attend, so that their report, made in his presence, might appear less suspicious to the King, his master, with whom he feared this might embroil him. However, either on account of having been bribed, or because Madame had really died only of a colic, the doctors certified that, after having thoroughly examined her body, they had found no sign of poison whatever. The King could not have acted more judiciously than in insisting on a witness like the ambassador, so that he might make a report to His Britannic Majesty. Accordingly, this prince, though affected at the sad end of his sister, having soon consoled himself in the arms of his new mistress, quickly yielded to her advice. She urged him to join with his Majesty in making war upon the Dutch, whose ships refused to lower their flag when they met his own.

No sooner had Louis XIV. made things safe in this quarter, than he no longer abstained from punishing the Duc de Lorraine for all his plots against him in most of the European Courts, especially in Holland, and, as this prince was much discredited, the King had no difficulty in seizing his country. The Maréchal de Créqui, with fifteen thousand men, made himself master of it in a month, and the Prince de Lorraine, whom no one thought of assisting, and who had accumulated much ready money, most of which was in the bank at Frankfort, and brought him in a large revenue, consoled

himself for the loss of his dominions with it. The King proceeded to garrison such fortresses in his new conquest as seemed advantageous for him to keep, and demolished the rest.

About this time, a thing happened to a man who had been a musketeer and who was then an officer in the guards, which the more deserves to be made public, as he to-day gives himself airs. Nevertheless, were I in his place, I should go and hide myself, since never did such a discreditable adventure happen to anyone as this was. He does not, however, fail to appear at the Court of Monsieur, in a good post, which is the product of his swindling and holds his head up like anybody else, just as if he had nothing to reproach himself with. I was the cause of what I am about to speak of being discovered, but here it is and how it happened!

There was at Paris, in the Rue des Bourdonnais, a great dealer in French lace named Moisi, if I remember his name correctly. He is not too prosperous at present, and our friend the swindler wanted at that time to begin his downfall. This dealer, who in his line of business did the biggest trade in Paris, had a lace manufactory at Aurillac, which had destroyed the Venetian lace trade, and which was protected by M. Colbert, because he had declared himself the patron and protector of all persons introducing these sort of things into France. As Moisi passed for a Croesus and always had the finest wares in Paris, a certain relation of M. le Premier, an intriguing woman (who with her daughter had a strange adventure, which caused Courboier to have his head cut off and forced them to fly to Spain), went to this

Moisi and told him she had been commissioned to buy a handkerchief of French lace for a person of rank, who was about to marry, together with all the other purchases usual on such occasions. Moisi knew what she was and, consequently, should have been suspicious, but as she sometimes carried out commissions and he had even once already made something through her, he received her just as if she had been some regular customer. He showed her his goods and, after she had chosen about four thousand francs' worth, she told him to bring them to her house that evening; a relation of the young lady would be there, and she was anxious he should see her purchases, so that, subject to her approval, he might settle the bill.

Moisi went and found there our friend the officer of the guards, who gave himself great airs, as has always been his way, at least, since he made a fortune at gambling, for before that he hardly had a suit worth ten crowns to wear. Moisi, who saw he was well turned out, at first had a good deal of respect for him, especially because the lady had said that he had the money for the purchase in his purse. He showed him his wares just as he had done the lady, and the great man having signified his approval by a nod, payment was the only thing now wanting to conclude the business. The lady then told Moisi that M. le Comte (for thus did she term this master rogue) only had a bill of exchange to give in settlement, and that, as it was for a bigger sum than the extent of the purchase, he must himself draw another for the excess. It was on Messrs. Couteux, the famous Paris bankers, so it was as good as gold itself. Moisi, either because he believed her, or because he was frightened at having perceived two or three men

when entering the house, who looked like regular cut-throats, agreed to the proposition. The bill was for seven thousand francs and the pretended comte endorsed it, Moisi drawing another, as the lady had proposed. M. le Comte took it and the box of laces at the same time, but hardly had this dealer left the house and entered the hired carriage which had brought him, than he felt sure he had been caught. He was, consequently, very impatient to get home, so as to take the advice of one of his neighbours, who was up to trickery, as to what he should do. This neighbour blamed him very much for having been so foolish as to give up his goods and note of hand, to which Moisi replied that he could not have acted otherwise, because there was a great likelihood that he would have been assassinated, had he refused, it having been such a very cut-throat place, that in his position he would perhaps have done no less. The house was beyond the gates near the Invalides, so that he might have been killed, a thousand times over, without any-one coming to his help. The neighbour then said that, as the thing was done, a remedy must be found for it. His goods he must reckon lost, but he would get him well out of the matter of the bill of exchange, if he would let him. He must protest it before a notary and describe to him what had passed, just as he had now been doing. Further, he might go the next day with a commissaire to the lady, always supposing the house where the interview had occurred had not been a hired one, though he felt sure she had decamped, which would be seen on the morrow. Finally, so as to do nothing hastily, which he might repent of, he must himself, before all this, go or send

to Messrs. le Couteux, to discover if the bill of exchange given him was not a forgery, as seemed very likely.

Moisi deemed his advice good, except that he did not think that a commissioner would go to the lady's house without the authority of a superior judge, for she was of good family. At any rate, Moisi went himself to Messrs. le Couteux, who declared they did not know what the bill of exchange was, and that he had been taken in. This being so, he went to the notary, and protested his own bill, but, going home very puzzled and thinking of the individual who had tricked him, an idea came into his head that he was a musketeer, in consequence of which he came to my house at midnight. I had not yet gone to bed, and my servants telling me that a dealer in French lace was asking for me, on a matter of importance, I ordered him to be admitted, so as to see what it was. I at once recognised him, because he often brought his wares to the Court, and after having asked what I could do for him, he begged me to dismiss my servants, for he would say nothing before them. I did as he wished, and he then told me what had happened, and further, that he thought he had seen the pretended comte in a musketeer's tunic, drilling in the courtyard of the Louvre. I replied that he might very likely be mistaken, because I took as much care as I could only to choose men who would not disgrace me; nevertheless, as I did not claim to answer for all of them individually, he had but to tell me how I was to act, and I would satisfy him. After profuse thanks he explained his plan, which was this. If I could find the time, I was to be good enough to drill the Musketeers next day in the Pré aux Clercs about ten or eleven in

the morning, for he was eager to see them one after another, so as to discover if he was mistaken or not. He would pretend to arrive in a hired carriage, as if by chance, and would get out to salute me and, whilst standing by, would seize the opportunity to scan the men, as I made them defile.

I told him I should be very glad to do what he asked, though I would prefer the parade to take place a little earlier, because I wanted to go to the King's mass. To this he answered that, as he desired to be in good time at the lady's house, he would be obliged if I would make it as early as possible, so that he might go afterwards. This I told him I could not do, because it was now too late to send word to the musketeers, for they were not all at the Hôtel des Mousquetaires, many being in the town, whom it would take time to tell. Finally, he agreed to my own hour, which was between eight and nine in the morning. He went, two hours before that time, to threaten the lady with the ruin of her reputation, and that of her comte, if she did not have his goods and note returned to him. Indeed, he said he would do worse than this and deliver her over to the hands of the law, from which she would have much difficulty to escape, since she had already a bad record. The lady had not left the house, but made great difficulties about seeing Moisi, who only obtained admittance by declaring he had come on behalf of M. Colbert and would have the doors broken open by force. The lady suspected who it was when she heard the door of her room open, and, being prepared for him, no sooner had he called her a swindler than she asked if he was mad to speak in such a way? She pretended not to know what he was talking about,

but Moisi showing his teeth, more and more, and telling her that M. Colbert was warmly taking up the matter and that he would report what she was saying, to that minister, she became frightened and changed her tone. She declared that she had spoken as she had done because she was no longer in possession of the bill he wished her to return, with the goods. M. le Comte de —— had indeed played a trick which he should not have done; but, in spite of this, he was an honest man and it was to be believed that he had acted in this way against his will. All she could say to exculpate him was, that he had told her that he had lost a very considerable sum to a great noble of the Court and wanted to pay him within the twenty-four hours, as was the custom amongst men of honour. It seemed as if, not knowing where to obtain the first sou of the sum, he had deemed that he might make use of this artifice, because he had the wherewithal to prevent Moisi eventually losing anything. When the dealer heard this, he understood that the lady had the goods and her swindler the bill. This somewhat consoled him, for he had been told that his having protested it would prevent his having to meet it. Meanwhile, he asked her to return the laces, to which she made answer that she was ready to do so, but only on one condition, namely, that he would swear to her that he would neither directly nor indirectly oblige her to reveal the real name of the pretended comte. This he swore, because he desired nothing so much as to once more see his goods, and besides, he expected that, when the bill should be brought him, he would force the bearer to tell him the name of the person from whom

he had received it. He reckoned, I repeat, that, no matter how many hands it should have passed through, he would easily discover the original holder.

As he was a Huguenot, and people of that religion usually keep their oath, Moisi kept his. Meanwhile, when his goods were returned to him, it chanced that there was one handkerchief of French lace missing, which the comte had taken away. The lady made pretence of not having noticed this, and declared she would pay for it when she had some money. This was a bad chance for Moisi, but as it was not of much value (being worth thirty pistoles at most), he was so pleased at once more seeing the rest of his wares that he went away very happy.

He came to the Pré aux Clercs at the appointed time. All my musketeers were there, and I was eager to see if he had made a mistake or not, which was why I wanted to make all of them pass before him. I found Moisi much happier than he had been on the previous evening, and on my enquiring the reason, he told me about his interview with the lady. I declared that, with a little trouble, he was sure to discover the holder of his bill, even if the robber was not amongst the musketeers (which I sincerely hoped was the case), for he must be her lover or, at least, that of her daughter, who was very pretty. She it was who caused the death of Courboier. Moisi replied that I was right, and he would take good care not to be long in getting to the bottom of all this.

After some evolutions, I ordered a march past, but Moisi might well scan the ranks one after the other, he did not find the man he was looking for. I was delighted, as may be imagined, and afterwards got into

a carriage to go to the King's mass. The King, who was on the balcony to see the Cent Suisses, who had on new uniforms, saw me arrive from Paris and, alighting at the great iron grille, which is in front of the courtyard of Versailles (for he had gone there the night before without my knowledge), the King, I repeat, who was used to see me arrive in better time, at once asked me, when I had gone upstairs, what I had been doing to be so late. I replied that I would willingly tell him, if he would be pleased to give me an audience of a minute. He withdrew to hear what I had to say, and I told him of the adventure of Moisi and how pleased I had been to undeceive him as to the thief being a musketeer. His Majesty replied that I had done very well, and repeated in a loud voice before all the Court what I had quite quietly told him, except that he was good enough not to name the lady, by reason of the persons of consideration to whom she was related.

Moisi supplied Madame de la Vallière, and the King having told her the story, she sent for me to hear it first hand. I could tell her nothing she had not heard from his Majesty, for I had informed him of everything, without any omission whatsoever. Meanwhile, in spite of all Moisi's inquiries, he could not discover his man for some days, because so many men went to see the lady and her daughter that they were easily mistaken one for the other.

Ten or twelve days passed in this manner, without his being able to discover anything, but at the end of that time an abbé came to see him, to ask for payment of the bill of exchange he had drawn. He was the thief's brother, to whom apparently the comte had confided everything, because this abbé, having not

found Moisi at home, refused to say for what reason he had come. Nevertheless, he was much pressed to do so, for the dealer had given orders to the effect that, if by chance the bill should be presented, the bearer might be detained. The abbé came again two or three times without finding him at home, and would say no more than on the first occasion. At last, he did find him and told him the reason of his coming. Moisi, without saying that the man who had given him the bill was a rogue, asked to see it, on the pretence that he drew so many that he did not remember which one his was, whereupon the abbé rejoined that he had not got it upon him and would bring it the next day at a certain hour. Moisi had him followed to see where he went. He was on foot and, looking back from time to time, perceived that a spy was behind, which made him traverse a number of streets in which he had nothing to do, the spy following him all the time. Eventually, after much dodging, he reached the Pont Neuf, where he met a procuress or, at least, a woman who looked just like one. She stopped him and they began talking together. After the woman had proceeded on her way, the spy enquired of her who the abbé was, just as if he had known him by sight and forgotten. The woman told him straight out, so the man did not trouble to follow further. The name of the abbé was as well known as that of a Maréchal de France, for his brother had made it notorious by gambling and other things besides, which I will not mention. This made the spy think that it could only be this brother whom Moisi was searching for. He told the dealer of his discovery, at the same time as the abbé told his brother the result of his

journey and how he had been followed. He also declared that all his attempts at escape had been useless, owing to his having been stopped by a woman on the Pont Neuf who, accosted by the spy, had appeared to have described who he was.

The moment the pretended comte heard such news, he saw further concealment would be useless and determined to, himself, accuse Moisi of fraud, for this impudent thief imagined that, being as he was an officer in the guards and the holder of the bill, the judges would not dare pronounce against him. Indeed, they were actually about to decide against Moisi, when the Duc de Gévres prevented them. Having been informed of the affair by the dealer, he spoke to the King about it, and his Majesty, remembering the story I had told him, declared he would see justice done. Indeed, he at once ordered the Maréchal de Grammont to tell the officer of guards on his behalf, that he must resign his post and give up the bill to Moisi, adding that he did not know the reason why he was not delivering him into the hands of justice to be punished as he deserved.

After such a command, the officer was obliged to abandon his lawsuit and leave his regiment, but as he forgot this insult and the reproaches of his conscience, he now holds his head up, just as if he were the most honest man in the world.

My acquaintance with Moisi caused me to buy from no other dealer, whenever I wanted linen, either for myself or for friends of mine in the provinces. On one occasion, on which I went to his house about dinner time, he told me he had the best wine in France, and as I appeared to have not yet dined and must certainly dine somewhere, it would be an inexpressible

pleasure if I would allow him to give me dinner. He asked me so pleasantly that I was about to say that I would accept his invitation with pleasure, when I remembered that he was a Protestant and that it was Friday; so, thinking that he would only have meat to give me, I answered that he had not thought of this, and that, though I was a soldier, I did not fail to fast every Friday and Saturday. He rejoined that he did not see why I should speak thus, for he had no desire to make me abandon my good habits and he would give me a turbot, with some trout, and mayhap I should eat no better, even at the King's table. This was entertaining me handsomely, for I liked trout better than any other fish ; so, saying I would willingly stay to dinner, he gave me half a glass of wine whilst waiting for it to be served, because it was already beginning to get late. Meanwhile, a lady of rank came into Moisi's shop wishing to buy something, and was announced by one of his servants in the sort of room in which we were, behind the shop. He went out to see her and I went with him, because she happened to be an acquaintance of mine. We joked together, and time not hanging heavy on my hands, for she was very pretty, and I had drunk a cup or two of wine, it was quite half past two before we sat down to table.

Whilst we had been in the shop, so many other women, both Court and town ladies, had come in, that Moisi and his wife had undone nearly all their boxes. His wife, who was by no means stupid, stayed in the shop to look after things, for there was still someone there. Amongst others, there was a priest, who had come to see the foreman, who was from the same province and an old acquaintance. As he often came

and was considered an honest man, no suspicion was felt about him; but Moisi's wife, chancing to look at a box which was near him, noticed that it was nearly empty, which surprised her, since, though many people had been into the shop, hardly anything had been sold. This made her watch the priest, without showing it, and having seen him put his hand in another box, from which he adroitly abstracted a bit of lace, she quietly went and informed her husband, not liking apparently to do so out loud, because I was there and she was afraid of outraging propriety by making him get up from table. He, perhaps, had the same idea, so, seeing them both astonished, I was obliged to enquire what had happened. At first they wanted to conceal the matter, but their embarrassment betraying them in spite of themselves, Moisi at last told me what it was. I said that he was very foolish to keep silent about it and, even were he with a prince of the blood and not with me, he should go and order the robber to disgorge. Moisi then replied that there was another thing to be thought of, as to which he would much like my advice. He himself was a Huguenot, whilst the thief was a Catholic, and, as we were at a time when war was beginning to be waged against that religion, he feared he might get into some trouble at Court, and that it might be said that he had played a trick of this kind to avenge the injuries which men of the thief's cloth were every day inflicting upon his co-religionists. Consequently, he did not know whether he ought to lodge a complaint about it. I retorted that, if he continued to speak in this way, I should lose more than half the good opinion I had formed about him

since we had become acquainted. There was no question what should be done, and I would go bail that, whatever he might do, no one should find any cause for finding fault.

Eventually, I roused Moisi so much that he left the table to enter his shop. The priest had already departed, after having filled his pockets and stockings with what he had taken. He had said good-bye to his compatriot, with an assurance more worthy of a murderer than a man of his character. There were two doors to the shop—one in the Rue des Bourdonnais and the other where formerly stood the Hotel de Villeroi, in the place of which is now the chief post office. On enquiry, it was found that the thief had made his exit by the door of the Rue des Bourdonnais, and Moisi having run after him, followed by two of his servants, caught him at the corner of the first street he was about to turn into. He seized him by the corner of his cloak and, telling him the reason, the priest began to try and arouse the people by calling out that his aggressor was a Huguenot. Happily for Moisi, he was in his own neighbourhood, where he bore the repute of being an honest man; so although some passers-by who did not know him would have interfered on behalf of the priest, they soon came to reason, when the neighbours declared that they were ready to personally answer for the dealer who, though a Huguenot, was not the man to insult anybody; besides, the priest had only to submit to be searched to clear himself, which would be much the best thing for him to do.

The passers-by at once changed sides, and were the first to want him to be searched; indeed, they went further and searched him themselves in spite of his

protests and, having discovered five or six hundred crowns worth of lace in his pockets, or somewhere else, which I dare not mention, they took him off to the Châtelet, after having given him a good dressing. There chanced to be an "exempt" there, who entered the priest as a prisoner, at the instance of Moisi, without finding out whether that dealer approved or not, which indeed was not the case, since he had no desire to spend a sou in law costs, having recovered all his goods, which had been faithfully returned to him by the searchers. Consequently, he no sooner learnt what the exempt had done, than he disowned his responsibility. Tardieu was not then the lieutenant-criminal; it was Dessita who still holds that position to-day, and under whom justice has not always flourished too well. If proof of this is needed, I will at once proceed to give it. Dessita no sooner learnt that Moisi would not proceed against the priest than, vexed at losing his perquisite, he set the Procureur du Roi to work, who was as self-seeking as himself. Nevertheless, he was a person of rank but as poor as Job, a reason which often makes people do that which they would not do if they were rich. This magistrate sent to Moisi to tell him he must deposit at his office the lace found upon the priest, because, though it was a dumb witness, it was yet more important than any other. Moisi understood very well what this meant, namely, that the magistrate and the lieutenant-criminel, having lost hope of having a bite at him, wished to revenge themselves on the lace. Consequently, he sent back word that there were enough other witnesses of the theft besides his wares, of which there was no need, as M. le Procureur du Roi made out.

This answer did not please the two magistrates, who again sent word that it had been adjudged that he should produce these laces and, in default of his doing so, a guard would be placed in his house, which alarmed this poor dealer so much that he came to see me in a state of fright. He told me what had occurred, and I could only shrug my shoulders at the story. I was not able to conceal what I thought of it from him, and, making use of language not too flattering to the two magistrates, asked what he meant to do in the matter. Moisi replied that he had come to see me about this, and to beg me to say a word to the King, who, just and equitable as he was, would never allow such a piece of injustice, and, as M. le Premier President often came to pay him his respects, he might order him to silence the two judges. I then made answer that I knew of a better way for him to obtain redress, namely, that he should go and see M. Colbert, to whom he had easy access, and give him an account of what had happened. That minister was sufficiently powerful to call the two magistrates to order, as they deserved. Moisi took my advice and, having at once taken a carriage on the Place du Palais Royal, went to St. Germain, where the Court then was. No sooner had he described the projected piece of injustice to the minister than he told him that he would give such effectual orders that he did not think anyone would dream of harming him further. He besides bade him not fail to come to his house in Paris in two days, at eight in the morning, when he would be at once admitted into his private room. Moisi returned from St. Germain very pleased, and came the next morning to inform me of

the success of his journey. I duly congratulated him, but on his afterwards returning to his house, his wife told him that the two magistrates had again sent to say that he was making sport of them by not carrying out their orders, and they would give him this last chance, as he was a good tradesman; but if he did not avail himself of it, it would be the worse for him. Upon this Moisi asked for a further delay of forty-eight hours, giving as a reason that there were some marriages taking place at Court and that he was obliged to go backwards and forwards, as he was supplying the trousseaus. In the meantime, M. Colbert, who, it is fair to say, likes rectitude, had no sooner reached Paris than he remembered the promise he had made, and sent to each of the magistrates a short note ordering them, on behalf of the King, to come and see him the next morning at eight o'clock. In due course they arrived at half past seven, very much puzzled as to why the minister wished to see them, for they had no idea it was with reference to Moisi. A quarter of an hour later the dealer appeared, which at once enlightened these magistrates and made them regret the way in which they had behaved, but as there was now no remedy, they put a good face on the matter and told one another that they would be very lucky if they got off with a lecture. M. Colbert presently summoned them to his room and told them that he was very glad to have heard of their way of administering justice, which he would faithfully describe to the King; he then proceeded to further comment upon their behaviour. After he had finished, they tried to make excuses, declaring that no witnesses were to be found. Moisi, however, who was present in the room and who felt he

had the support of the minister, said this was untrue, for a hundred witnesses could have been collected in the street. Colbert then resumed his lecture, and said that naturally they felt bound to make some excuse, whether bad or good; but he would, nevertheless, advise them not to proceed with such a bad case, because, if he were to mention it to his Majesty, the least thing which could happen was, that they would be ordered to resign their posts. Only a word would be needed, but as thank God! he never harmed anyone, except at the last extremity, he would not say anything about the matter to the King, always supposing he heard no more talk of their injustice. Should he again hear the least whisper of it, he would guarantee the King would make them account for the past and present in a way they would have reason to remember all their lives, and they would not escape with only the loss of their posts, but would most likely be treated like the judges of the chaste Susannah, who, Scripture teaches us, were put to death. M. Colbert was beginning to illustrate his speeches with as many examples as possible to show that, although he had never studied, he was not so ignorant as people thought. Indeed, he was even beginning to learn Latin, because he had formed an idea of becoming Chancellor. M. le Tellier likewise aspired to this. Pierre Seguier, who held the office, was growing worn out by age and work, so both these ministers were taking their measures in good time, so that, in the event of his death, they would reap the fruits of their pains. Be this as it may, M. Colbert having dismissed the lieutenant-criminel and the Procureur du Roi with the lecture I have just described, they abandoned all further idea of sending

unpleasant messages to Moisi, and determined to confine themselves to molesting people who were not under anyone's protection. Moisi did not trouble himself about this, nor I either, because I had never been wont to poke my nose in their affairs except on his account.

But to return to other matters of greater consequence than this. The King, being certain of his Britannic Majesty on account of a secret treaty, began to show the Dutch signs of his ill-will by supporting the claims of the Elector of Cologne (who was also Prince de Liège), with whom he had allied himself. Louis XIV. had also made sure of the Bishop of Munster and the Elector Palatine. The Elector, who was a Protestant, had discarded his first wife and made another marriage, which had alienated his daughter, now Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. The Dutch, who perceived what was on foot, issued an edict forbidding the introduction into their country of French wines and brandy, on which their merchants were every year wont to spend much money in France. They did not wish to furnish funds to be spent against themselves. The French noblesse, which had ruined itself in raising troops at its own expense, was wiser on this occasion, but, nevertheless, five hundred and seventy-two people asked leave to raise companies of cavalry and many others infantry. His Majesty selected such of them as he pleased, which he did by pricking the paper with their names inscribed upon it. The King also raised a regiment of horse in Switzerland, a thing which had never before been seen, for though that country produces many horses, a Swiss on horseback had always appeared such an extraordinary thing that it was almost accounted a prodigy.

Seeing all these preparations, the Dutch had recourse to the King of England, who had not yet declared himself, and even sought assistance against that prince in his own Parliament. But his Britannic Majesty had won over most of its members with money given him by the King, and so they were very astonished to see everyone turning their backs upon them. Meanwhile, England began to arm, and Charles II. was making arrangements about two regiments which were to join the French army. The Dutch had circulated a number of libels of every description on Louis XIV., and had even called him "the King of Reviews." Besides this, they had said a number of foolish things about his love affairs, as if, because one is a King, one is not a man! In any case, they had very much offended him, as I myself have heard his Majesty say.

The Dutch, not having been able to get anything out of the King of England, sent Grotius to Paris as their Ambassador-Extraordinary, to see if he could reinstate them in the good graces of his Majesty. He was a man of far more judgment than Van Beuningue, though not so fiery. Proceeding to set spies to work in the town and Court, he discovered that most people shared the King's resentment against his country, which they declared would never have resisted the Spaniards without the help of Henri IV. and Louis XIII., or even without that of the present King. He then expressed to his Majesty the surprise felt in Holland at his being about to attack that country after he had acted as its defender, but the King showed himself inexorable, and told the ambassador that these were his own words rather than those of the people who had sent him. Never had republicans behaved as they had done, and

it was time to make them repent, which he would do, or die in the attempt. The Dutch who had rather expected such an answer, then sent to implore the help of the German Princes and Northern Powers, but as these princes were informed that Holland was too powerful to be crushed at one blow, they determined to delay helping it till such time as it should have been beaten. The Prince of Orange, who had offered to reconcile the Dutch with the King, his uncle, if they would employ him, was accorded the rank of stadtholder by them, which he accepted, though he might have hoped for more, on account of his birth. Being, however, very diplomatic, he kept his aspirations to himself for the present.

Meanwhile, the King sent Grotius away with great personal marks of esteem, though he continued very angry with his country. This ambassador was a friend of De Witt and very solicitous for his interests, for they had a bond of friendship in the fact that the fathers of both of them had been enemies of the late Prince of Orange and imprisoned by him. Grotius found De Witt very disturbed on his return, because it seemed to him that the party of the Prince of Orange was gaining ground every day. This young prince spoke little, either from fear of saying something his enemies might turn to his disadvantage or because he already knew that a great flow of words is of no use to anyone, especially not to a prince, whose words are certain to be weighed one after the other. In only three months' time the prince's position had much improved, which augured well for his future, as it was known that the more formidable Louis XIV. became to the Dutch, the greater need they would have of him.

Meanwhile, his Majesty took the field at the head of a fine army. He gave the command of two others to M. le Prince and to the Comte de Chamilli, who, nevertheless, had borne arms against him all his life. I could not follow the King in this memorable campaign, which will never be matched. His Majesty had given me the governorship of Lille, to which town I had to go. I was about to take the place of the Marquis d'Humières, who had succeeded the Marquis de Bellefonds, and thus could not be an eye witness of all I am about to describe. However, the company which I had the honour to command followed the King on this journey: I say journey, for it seems to me that, as his Majesty only went from conquest to conquest without stopping a moment, it should rather be called by that name than any other.

The year before, some musketeers had been detached, both from the Black Musketeers as well as the Gray, to go towards Cologne. When the King had instructed me to form this detachment, he had not given me the reason, because, as war had not yet been declared, he did not wish anyone to know where he was going. He had only told me that its destination was Châlons, which was true, since it was on the way. The King also instructed me to tell the men to take a shirt or two with them—there the order (which I received from the hands of the Sieur Charpentier, one of the clerks of the Marquis de Louvois) stopped. My own idea was that the detachment was to go and meet Madame, for it was at this time that Monsieur's marriage took place.

When the King had given me the post of the Duc de Nevers, I had got him to bestow my own upon

one of my relatives named La Rivière, who was a good officer commanding an old regiment. He was not a young man, nor did he possess that bearing which is necessary for the commander of such a body as the musketeers, and consequently he was not liked at all. He would even come and tell me from time to time that all his men made game of him and paid him no more respect than if he had not been my nominee and a relative of mine. I do not mention this by reason of the respect they ought to have felt for me, but on account of that which they certainly did feel; for as they knew that I looked upon them no more nor less than as if they had been my children, I may say of them that they all regarded me as if I had been their father, except on this occasion. I did not like to mention the matter to them, because there was more youth than vice about it, but I casually made a remark to La Rivière, so that he might abstain from certain things which offended them, but he had "taken his bent," as the saying is, so it was impossible for me to correct him. The result of this will be seen later on; but as I cannot speak of it till I have first of all described everything which happened in this campaign, it must be known that the Spaniards, the better to conceal the scheme they had of declaring against his Majesty directly they found a chance of doing so, no sooner heard of his arrival before Charleroi than they sent to offer him everything which they could.

The whole Court looked upon these offers with suspicion. A certain author of this century has said that it is the Spanish character "to lie with gravity." The King was fully equal to them because, as the proverb

says, "one learns to howl with the wolves;" so, having returned compliment for compliment, he continued on his way and approached Liège. The chapter of St. Lambert there, which was displeased at the war beginning to desolate the country, also sent to compliment him, which wise people deemed should be regarded in the same way as the overtures of the Spaniards, and not taken literally. Meanwhile, if the country was impoverished by the march of the three armies which made some stay in it, the capital thoroughly enriched itself. The King proceeded to encamp at Wiset, a little town on the Meuse half way between Liège and Maestricht. M. le Prince came there from Condros, where his army was to hold a council of war. It was not yet decided whether to attack Maestricht, which was a strong fortress with a big garrison, or not. However, the Marquis de Louvois declaring that he had certain information from Holland that, if the King proceeded towards the Rhine, no resistance would be offered in that direction, M. le Prince at once declared that this was what should be done. No one dared contradict him, especially after what the Marquis de Louvois had said. This nobleman, though he had not entirely abandoned his youthful follies, did not now fail to apply himself to serious matters in a different way from that in which he had done in the past. He had, indeed, abandoned them so little that, a short time before leaving Paris, he had again found himself in a place of ill repute—a circumstance which had made the fortune of a lieutenant of infantry named Breteuil, who had been there before him. The King had bestowed the office of "Chancelier de ses ordres" upon the marquis, and he could, therefore, wear the

cordon just as the chevaliers did. However, when he went to this house he took off the cordon from fear of disgracing it. Breteuil at once recognised him on entering, but was not so foolish as to show it; on the contrary, he pretended to take him for some counter-jumper from a shop in the Rue St. Denis, which he somewhat resembled, especially when in undress. He began to joke before the girls, and the minister, being attracted by his jollity and only wanting a lark, told him they must sup together, and he would give him supper in that very house, and a very good one too. Breteuil, as may be imagined, wanted nothing better, and making use of all his abilities to be more amusing than ever, he succeeded so well that the marquis did not scruple to make himself known to him, stipulating that he should not behave any more seriously than before; for were he to do so he would displease far more than please him. Breteuil did all he wished, and some time after, the King having bestowed a regiment of dragoons on Firmacon, Exempt des Gardes du Corps, the marquis had him given the majority.

But not to lose sight of my subject, the King's army crossed the Meuse by a bridge of boats near Wiset and proceeded towards the Rhine. Although it was the middle of May, when the heat begins to be felt, his Majesty feared the sun and dust no more than he had done in his early youth, when, as I have said, he had often been seen on horseback for whole days. He marched at the head of his army without ever using his carriage, which was with the baggage. M. le Prince went in front with his army and arrived before Wesel, and, at the same time or a day later, his Majesty reached Orsoi. Two days before, the Vicomte de Turenne had

been sent to attack Burick. All three places were taken at the same time, and the King then moved his camp to before Rhimbergue, which was garrisoned by fifteen hundred men and had an Irishman named "Osseri" as governor, who it was reckoned would make a good defence, as his governorship was his only fortune. A panic, however, seizing him, or being perhaps bribed (as seems very likely) he surrendered without striking a blow. The King then crossed the Rhine, whilst M. le Prince went to attack Rées, which he took, together with Emerick, for the whole country was terror-stricken. Some other small towns threw open their gates without one's even having the trouble to summon them to do so.

The Prince of Orange had only twenty-five thousand men (and these new levies) to resist the King and M. le Prince, who had sixty thousand. He contented himself with fortifying Issel, which is an arm of the Rhine enclosing a number of important fortresses, because it was necessary for him to occasionally go to the Hague. De Witt, whose influence had much diminished, had attempted to have an army of twelve thousand men raised for the defence of Holland only and so check the growing power of the prince, but he had been opposed in this scheme, and was meanwhile seeking for other means of effecting his object. Meanwhile, the Comte de Guiche, whom the King had allowed to return to France, sent to have the Rhine sounded by his écuyer, for a gentleman of the country had told him that the army could swim across at the Château de Tholhuys, and he wished to see if it was true. The crossing was found to present no great difficulties, and his Majesty, when he heard it, was delighted. He set out with his household and two thousand horse,

and repairing to the camp of M. le Prince, at once made arrangements for undertaking this exploit. In the meantime, the Prince of Orange had been warned that people had been observed sounding the Rhine, and had sent Montbas with some troops to oppose any crossing which might be attempted. He soon withdrew, however, by the orders of De Witt, who desired a reverse, in order that the Prince of Orange might be discredited. The latter was very surprised at this and sent Wurtz there, who was a different sort of man from Montbas.

The King having reached a height opposite Tholhuys about two hours after midnight, ordered M. le Prince to attempt the crossing. At first, this was done in single file, and as it was the middle of summer,[1] when there is, as it were, no night, the King soon perceived those in the water. The river was angry at its waters being used as stepping-stones for horses, if I may speak like the poets, but the style of an historian and a writer of memoirs should be more natural than this, so I will content myself with saying that, notwithstanding the turbulence of the waters, the soldiers continued their advance indifferent to death. Certainly, ten or twelve of the leaders (who were nearly all volunteers) were drowned, but the rest avoided the place where they had perished, and did well in doing so. However, when they had overcome the dangers of the river, they were confronted by the enemy, but, reinforcements crossing, the foe was made to flee. The King then ordered his household to enter the stream, and obeyed just as if it there had been a bridge. A prince was one of those who did just the same as the others, but two or three men

1 It was June 12th 1672.

more fit for Paris than warfare abstained from entering the river, which was crossed in less than no time. Meanwhile, the enemy had withdrawn and was awaiting the attack of the King's troops.

M. le Prince (to whom fell the honours of the day), his eyes sparkling with joy, would not allow his work to remain unfinished, and, crossing the river in a boat with the Duc d'Enghien and the Duc de Longueville and some other great persons, the Duc de Longueville (by an inconsiderate act which cost him his own life) very nearly caused the death of the whole party. The enemy, after having fired fifteen or twenty musket shots on some people who had approached too near to them, saw these lords approaching and were already beginning to ask for quarter, when the Duc de Longueville shouted out that they must expect none. He even added deeds to his words and fired a pistol which killed one of their officers. This rendered the foe desperate, and they fired on him and all the others of the party, so that hardly one of them failed to pay the penalty of the duc's rashness. M. le Prince was wounded, as was the Duc de Coassin and the Duc de Vivonne. The Prince de Marsillac was also hurt, together with some other people of the first rank. As for the Duc de Longueville, he was more unfortunate still, for he was killed upon the spot, as was the Marquis de Guitry, Grand Master of the King's wardrobe.

I pass over in silence a number of other people of rank who were either killed or wounded, but, be this as it may, no quarter was now given. The Château de Tholhuys, where all the people of the country had deposited their wealth, was then pillaged, and enriched

all those who were able to be the first upon the scene. A bridge of boats was constructed, over which the King made his cannon pass and proceeded to inform the Vicomte de Turenne of the success of his expedition. The Prince de Condé, though his wound was only in the wrist, was half-dead from it and was obliged to yield up the command of his army to the Vicomte de Turenne, who at once led it towards Arnhein. The whole island of Bethac was given up to pillage. Meanwhile, the Prince of Orange, who was defending Issel, no sooner learnt what had happened than he abandoned his entrenchments and went towards Nimégue, where he found Montbas, whom he had arrested and had conveyed to Utrecht.

The King, after having found Issel abandoned, crossed the river and laid siege to Doesburg, in which was a good garrison. It defended itself, however, very badly and surrendered in two or three days. His Majesty then proceeded by way of Nimégue, which the Vicomte de Turenne had captured after the taking of Arnhem. These conquests frightened the people of Utrecht, and so the Prince of Orange, not feeling himself safe, retired to Bodegrave, taking with him Montbas, whom he had great difficulty in saving from the populace, who called him a traitor. In the meantime, Jean de Witt caused envoys to be sent to his Majesty, to ask for peace at any price. The Bishop of Munster, for his part, came to the King's camp to pay his respects, as did the Duc de Neubourg and some other princes. His Majesty's camp seemed to them the most beautiful and agreeable thing in the world. The King, who made great nobles dine with him, had his violins to play during the repast, and the magni-

ficence which prevailed was unbounded, the discipline of the troops being at the same time good. The King gave the governorship of Utrecht (of which the keys had been surrendered) to the Marquis de Rochfort. This nobleman was not a man of great capacity, and he did so badly that, after a thousand faults, which were the cause of the King's failing to make himself master of Holland, he had to be dismissed.

Before all this, the combined fleets of France and England had attacked that of Holland, which had done much better at sea than on land. Be this as it may, John de Witt, knowing that an understanding existed between the two kings, thought it necessary to send ambassadors to Charles II. as well as to the King, with a view to obtaining a peace. Madame de Montespan was now already obtaining some ascendency over his Majesty, and by her influence, M. de Pomponne was told off to deal with the Dutch envoys to the King. They, however, declared that they would deal with no one but Louis XIV. himself, and would meanwhile communicate with the Hague, which was not far off. Two young men made an attack upon De Witt, as he was leaving the council, but he was not seriously injured. Shortly afterwards, however, the people, blaming him for the ill-success of the embassy to the King, threw both him and his brother into prison, and, eventually, growing more and more furious, burst into their chamber, smashed the door open with mallets and massacred both brothers, who mutually encouraged one another. The maddened populace then seized their bodies and hung them up by the heels in front of the Vivier, where justice is usually done.

After this, there was no more talk of peace. The

Prince of Orange now began to become all powerful in the Republic, and assumed the office of admiral, in addition to his present post of stadtholder. As it was now impossible for the Dutch to keep the remains of their country, unless they destroyed the dikes, three out of their seven provinces having been captured, the Prince of Orange determined that such a course should be taken, and his council having agreed, the dikes were duly broken. Meanwhile, the prince, being certain, now that the country was covered with water, that the King would not capture it, very speedily began to prepare for the trial of Montbas, upon whose death he had resolved. Montbas, however, bribed one of his guards and escaped to Arnhem, where he offered his services to M. le Prince, who sent him to the Duc de Luxenbourg, after having, first of all, advised him to await at Cologne the orders of his Majesty and a pardon for having borne arms against his country.

His Majesty did not stay longer in Holland, once he had lost hope of making himself master of the remainder of the country. He retired by way of Dutch Brabant, reconnoitring on his way Bois le Duc, which is a very strong fortress. The King did not attack it, for his army had been weakened by the garrisons he had been obliged to leave in his conquests. M. le Prince had always advised the King to raze the fortresses he captured and withdraw the garrisons, but he had not followed his advice. Consequently, he had only a small body of men with him, which, besides being shameful for a great king like his Majesty, might have inspired certain Powers with the boldness to side with his enemies, which otherwise they would never have dared think of

M. le Prince had not been wrong in pointing this out to the King. The Emperor, the King of Spain and the Elector of Brandenburg, who at the beginning of the campaign had been cautious on account of the King's great power, now began to raise their heads, on perceiving all his forces engaged in guarding walls. They had all three made a secret treaty with Holland and, after being subsidised by it, had raised troops to go to its help as they had promised. This was common property, and the King heard of it from all sides. M. le Marquis de Louvois, however, persuaded the King to keep all his captives against the advice of M. le Prince. His Majesty, having returned to France, left the command of his troops to the Marquis de Rochefort. Before leaving, he ordered him to invest Maestricht so as to consume the forage around that fortress, which he intended to besiege at the beginning of the next campaign. Rochefort, who was brave but unwise, fatigued his troops (who he did not remember were the pick of all his Majesty's soldiers) so much by his continual fear of being surprised, that he knocked them up in less than no time.

Meanwhile, some one in the office sent word to a friend of his in the King's household that he must be in readiness to start for Germany, for, as his Majesty had no better troops than those of the household, they were about to be sent there. The orders were being drawn up and would shortly be received. This news came from too good a source for the officer to disbelieve it and so, the rumour at once spreading amongst the troops, four hours later everyone in this little army knew of it. Immediately some musketeers (especially those who had the year before been sent to

Germany on the pretext of going to Châlons) declared they would not set out. They even dared to complain in public that they had been tricked, since, on pretence of a voyage of forty leagues, they had been made to march into such a distant country, without money, equipment, or even linen. La Rivière tried to keep them quiet, but as he had no more the gift of making himself feared than loved, he perceived that his efforts were vain, and at once sent for me.

I no sooner heard of this than I sent one of my friends to these musketeers, whom they knew from having often seen him with me. I bade him tell them on my behalf that, if they wished to please me, they would not behave as they were doing. Meanwhile, as I felt sure that some of them had been made to adopt such a determination by lack of money, I had given my friend a thousand louis, so that he might lend it to those in need. I thought this would settle matters, but no one took my money, either from pride or because some slight desire of dissipation, as seems very likely, made them wish to return to Paris. Indeed, after the Marquis de Rochefort had executed his orders and was told to give the command of the King's household over to Lancon, Lieutenant des Gardes du Corps, to take them to the Vicomte de Turenne at Wesel, all these rebels deserted. La Rivière did not dare exert his authority to make them stay, and so about thirty of them went off. I was informed of what had happened and obtained from the Court an order to arrest them when they reached Paris. This was an example I owed the company, in order to keep it another time to its duty. The deserters were confined at Fort l'Evêque, but their leader unfortunately escaped me.

The King's household was going to join M. de Turenne on account of the advance of the Elector of Brandenburg with twenty-five thousand men. Meanwhile, the Prince of Orange besieged Worden, which was defended by the Comte de la Mark and the regiment of Picardy. He was, however, obliged to raise the siege. After this campaign had been going on for some time, the Prince proceeded to pretend to be about to attack Tongres. Montal,[1] to whom the King had given the governorship of Charleroi, had been ordered to be careful, but the prince, instead of besieging Tongres, as had been expected, into which Montal had hurried, of a sudden turned towards Charleroi and besieged it. The Court was very much surprised to hear such news, and Montal being very confused to see an old stager like himself caught and thoroughly taken in by a young Prince not yet twenty-two years old, determined to re-enter his fortress or be killed in the attempt. He was lucky enough to succeed, and the prince raised the siege. It is true that the main reason was his having heard that the King had left St. Germain with all the Court, to come and give him battle. All the troops on the frontier of Picardy were already assembling to form an army corps. But his Majesty, having heard this news, caused the troops to return to their garrisons, and retraced his steps.

It only remained for this monarch, in order to make him the most glorious prince in the world, to have a fortunate success against the Elector of Brandenburg. The Vicomte de Turenne drove him out of Westphalia into his own States and, indeed, used the Elector so

1 See Vol. II., p. 284.

roughly that he was obliged to have resort to the clemency of the King. He offered to renounce his alliance with the Dutch, if his Majesty would withdraw his army from his dominions. A treaty was drawn up about this between him and the Vicomte de Turenne, and, it having been ratified by the King and the Elector, towards the beginning of the year 1673, his Majesty found himself in a condition to pursue his victories against the Dutch and make the Spanish repent of having declared against him. For this reason he increased his troops by several regiments, both of cavalry and infantry. He also had his transport made ready so as to begin the campaign directly the season allowed.

I was delighted to follow him that year, as the Maréchal d'Humières had placed me in a position to do my duty as before, by coming to take my place. The King left Paris on the 1st of May, and having gone by way of Lille, the Spaniards tried to disavow all Marcin had done. They were afraid of the King attacking them with his army, and this was why they thought it best to sing small. The King inflicted some little slight upon them as punishment for their behaviour, and then we marched straight to Maestricht, which the King had on this occasion determined to attack.

* * * *

Here these Memoirs of M. d'Artagnan end. He was killed[1] at the siege, which only lasted thirteen days,

1 D'Artagnan was killed by a ball in the throat charging at the head of his musketeers on June 25th, 1673. See Introduction, to Vol. I., page viii.

though there was a powerful garrison and a governor whose reputation was great amongst military people. The Rhingrave who had died of some illness was no longer in command, his place having been taken by a man named Fariaux, who had been Mayor of Valenciennes, when the Vicomte de Turenne had been obliged to raise the siege, and the Maréchal de la Ferte had been captured before that town.

THE END